TRADE UNIONS, THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE DEATH OF WORKING-CLASS POLITICS IN NEW ZEALAND

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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts in Political Science
in the
University of Canterbury
by

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University of Canterbury
March 1976

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GRAPH

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

AOL	Alliance of Labour
ASRS	Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants
FOL	New Zealand Federation of Labour
IC & A Act	Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act
IR Act	Industrial Relations Act
LEC	Labour Electorate Committee
LRC	Labour Representation Committee
MP	Member of Parliament
NUR	National Union of Railwaymen
NZLP	New Zealand Labour Party
NZWWF	New Zealand Waterside Workers' Federation
NZWWU	New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union
PLP	Parliamentary Labour Party
TLCF	Trades and Labour Councils' Federation
TUC	Trade Union Congress

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I should first like to record the great debt that I owe to Dr Keith Ovenden, who was my supervisor, and Professor Keith Jackson, both of whom read, and offered constructive criticism of, each chapter of this thesis as it was completed. I have no doubt that their assistance and advice have much improved the end product. Of the people I interviewed in connection with this study, I should like to thank individually Mr Richard Northey, of the University of Auckland, for the use of his comprehensive thesis on the Labour Party's annual conferences, and Mr John Wybrow, general secretary of the Labour Party, for the use of the facilities, and access to the annual conference files, at the party's head office. I am also grateful to my two typists, Ms Janet Stephen (for the text) and Mrs Wendy Hughes-Johnson (for the tables), who together produced a very neat final version in very little time; to Ms Catriona Cameron, who verified some of my additions; to Mr Ian McChesney, who drew the graph; and, last but certainly not least, to my parents and sister, for their encouragement and assistance.

ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to contribute to a literature which as yet barely exists in political science. It is a study of the transformation of a working-class political party, more specifically of the declining involvement in the New Zealand Labour Party of the organizations out of which the party grew, the trade unions.

In the opening chapter, four indicators of the 'level' of trade union involvement in the party are examined. Changes in the proportion of all trade unionists and all trade unions affiliated to the party; in the proportion of trade unionists among all the delegates at, and in the proportion of union-originated remits considered by, the party's annual conferences; in the frequency of meetings of the Joint Council of Labour; and in the proportion of trade unionists among the members of the PLP all reveal that the Labour Party is much less the party of the organized working class today that it was in the years before World War II.

In the subsequent chapters, the causes of the trade unions' gradual abandonment of the party are identified and discussed: the success with which they have been able to pursue their primary objectives under

conditions of full employment in the post-war period; the institutionalization of the FOL, which has become an increasingly independent and effective interest group; the changing composition of the trade union movement; and the growing domination of the PLP by its middle-class elements. The conclusion states that, as a mass party, the Labour Party is moribund, but that, as the party of the working class, organized or otherwise, it is already dead.

INTRODUCTION

> Recognizing that political action is necessary and inevitable in the working-class movement, we agree to the formation of a political party for the enacting of legislation to better the condition of the working-class and ultimately to achieve its economic emancipation.[1]

This resolution was adopted amidst "much applause"[2] from delegates at a Unity Conference of New Zealand trade unions in January 1913. An historic step had been taken. The chain of events that the delegates had just set in motion was to culminate, three years later, in the formation of the New Zealand Labour Party, in which the political unity of the country's organized working class was at last achieved.

Initially, the Labour Party's membership was wholly 'indirect'.[3] Its constitution in 1916 made no provision for the recruitment of an individual membership. although it had inherited existing branches of the Social Democratic Party, out of which it had been born. The report of the foundation conference of July 7 and 8, 1916 stated that the basic organizational unit

1. Quoted in P H Hickey, 'Red Fed. Memoirs (Wellington: New Zealand Worker, 1925), p. 63.

2. Ibid.

3. 'Indirect' members are those who belong to parties by virtue of their membership of organizations which, as entities, are affiliated to the parties. 'Direct' members are those who join the parties individually. See Maurice Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State, 3rd English ed., trans. Barbara and Robert North (London: Methuen, 1964), pp. 5-6.

of the Labour Party would be the LRC, which would consist of "industrial unions and Federations, Trades and Labour Councils, District Councils, Social Democratic Party branches and other properly constituted progressive organizations which subscribe to the constitution and platform of the party".[4] However, the omission of any provision for an individual party membership appears, in retrospect, to have been merely an oversight. At its first annual conference in 1917, the party amended the constitution to enable emergent Labour Party branches to affiliate to the LRCs, along with individuals who resided in localities where branches did not yet exist.[5]

Thus, the Labour Party was never simply a political instrument of the trade union movement. The movement, however, was the party's 'bearer' and its 'mid-wife'. The unions preceded the party and established it after the necessity of a political arm had been impressed upon them by the events of 1912 and 1913 and by the introduction of conscription during World War I.[6] In 1918, the infant party comprised eleven branches and seventy-two affiliated unions (which supplied 10,000 of a total of 11,000 members).[7] Of eight Labour Party candidates elected to Parliament in the 1919 General Election, the first it had contested, only

4. "Official Report of the Joint Conference", in J T Paul, Humanism in Politics: New Zealand Labour Party Retrospect (Wellington: New Zealand Worker, 1946), p. 157.

5. Bruce Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour: A History of the New Zealand Labour Party from 1916 to 1940 (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1962), p. 33.

6. See Ibid., pp. 18-26.

7. "New Zealand Labor Party: Annual Conference, July 8, 9 and 10, 1918", in 1918 Conferences: UFL, NZTU and NZ Labor Party (Wellington: Maoriland Worker, 1918), p. 24.

one had not previously been active trade unionist. At the outset at least, the Labour Party was largely, although not exclusively, a trade union party.

Since they were founded, usually in the early stages of industrialization, other working-class political parties, like the respective societies in which they are to be found, have been transformed. Their widespread ideological transformation is well-known and well-documented,[8] as are the 'bourgeoisification' of their Parliamentary representatives,[9] and, in the case of the majority, the erosion of their mass-membership bases.[10] A few attempts have also been made to account for the apparent fact that the membership as well as leadership of the parties has tended to become less and less proletarian in composition.[11] Studying the British

8. See, for example, Leon D Epstein, Political Parties (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 55-59, 69-72; E Spencer Wellhofer and Timothy M Hennessey, Models of Political Party Organization and Strategy: Some Analytic Approaches to Oligarchy", in British Political Sociology Yearbook, vol. 1: Elites in Western Democracy, ed. Ivor Crewe (London: Croom Helm, 1974), pp. 279-316.

9. See on the British Labour Party, for example, Barry Hindess, The Decline of Working-Class Politics (London: Paladin, 1971), p. 9; Frank Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order (London: Paladin, 1972), p. 131; Wellhofer and Hennessey, "Some Analytic Approaches to Oligarchy", p. 313.

10. See, for statistics, Walter Kendall, The Labour Movement in Europe (London: Allen Lane, 1975), pp. 379-89; and, for theoretical explanation, Wellhofer and Hennessey, "Some Analytic Approaches to Oligarchy", pp. 298-301.

11. See Hindess, The Decline of Working-Class Politics, pp. 8-9.

Labour Party, Hindess, for example, discovered that there had been a marked shift in the distribution of the party's membership since World War II from more working-class to more middle-class types of area.[12] This he attributed to the fact that, in policy conflicts, the party leadership and middle-class sections of the membership, whose preferences were mutually compatible, had, in effect, formed an hegemonic alliance which was continually unresponsive to the claims of working-class party activists. The latter, in their disillusionment and in growing numbers, were consequently abandoning the party.[13]

Epstein, however, has identified two different causes of the erosion of the parties' working class bases: (i) the relative decline in the number of manual workers and relative growth in the number of service employees and white-collar workers in advanced industrialized economies;[14] and (ii) the dramatic improvement in the wages, hours and conditions of the declining number of industrial workers, who are now not nearly as impoverished as they were in the early stages of industrialization.[15] Alternative 'explanations' of the British Labour Party's loss of a disproportionately high number of working-class members emphasize the role of the Welfare State, of affluence, and of the improved opportunities for upward social

12. Ibid., p. 95.

13. Ibid., pp. 39, 112-50.

14. Cf. Jupp, Political Parties, p. 77: "The part of the industrial working class in the /Labour/ movements diminishes, as that class itself declines and is absorbed into tertiary employment".

15. Epstein, Political Parties in Western Democracies, pp. 153-55.

mobility for those who would once have become working-class, but are now middle-class, party activists.[16]

Yet no major study has sought to explain changes in the level of trade union involvement in the working-class parties to which they can affiliate.[17] Affiliated trade unions may respond quite differently, or may even be inert to, the stimuli that have brought about the diminution of the working-class element in the branch membership of these parties. Firstly, general disillusionment among the membership is likely to cost the party more direct than indirect members. Whereas the direct member "need merely stop paying his dues by default, the indirect affiliate must consciously decide to 'contract out'"[18] to avoid having part of his dues forwarded automatically to the party[19] or else the union as a whole must make a conscious decision to disaffiliate.[20] A trade union's or

16. Hindess, The Decline of Working-Class Politics, pp. 101-02.

17. Such parties exist in almost all the advanced industrialized democracies, as well as in some of the less industrialized democracies, such as New Zealand.

18. Wellhofer and Hennessey, "Some Analytic Approaches to Oligarchy", p. 301.

19. It is probably safe to assume that many trade unionists do not know that they are affiliated to the Labour Party. In a survey of the 'affluent' workers of Luton in Britain, 27 per cent of the Labour-voting trade unionists were found to be making financial contributions to the British Labour Party without being aware of it. See John H Goldthorpe, David Lockwood, Frank Bechhofer and Jennifer Platt, The Affluent Workers: Political Attitudes and Behaviour (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 28.

20. Possible alternatives to conscious disaffiliation by the individual unionist or the union are that the union administrator may decide not to, or else may forget to, forward affiliation fees to the party. Since affiliation is a charge upon the union membership and not upon the administrator himself, the former, however, is unlikely. It would be possible only to speculate as to the incidence of the latter.

trade unionist's affiliation to the party is rather more likely to continue merely out of custom or tradition, without being subject to any kind of cost-benefit analysis, than an individual's direct membership.

Secondly, since trade unions continue to exist independently of the party, the party may appear to trade unionists to be only an alternative, perhaps secondary, vehicle for the pursuit of their objectives, except for those which are attainable only by legislative enactment. This is likely to make unions more indifferent than individual members toward their links with the party. Trade unions and trade unionists will normally be less actively involved in the party than branches and branch members, but, even though the 'costs' of departure for them are likely to be lower, they are also less likely to become involved in the kind of intra-party dispute that may culminate in the alienation from the party of the defeated sections of the direct membership. We ought not to assume that the short- or long-term causes of the decline in the direct working-class membership of these parties have had the same effect upon the level of trade union involvement. Equally, we should take it for granted that where trade union involvement has shown a similar decline to working-class branch membership, it can be explained in terms of the same causes.

Our knowledge of the variables which influence the level of trade union involvement in indirect working-class parties is thus vague. Hence the two objectives of this study. The first (undertaken in chapter one) is to document in detail the overall change that has taken place in the level of trade union involvement in the New Zealand

Labour Party, primarily, but not exclusively, in the period since World War II. Four separate dimensions of union involvement will be examined. We shall look at: (i) changes in the proportion of all FOL and registered trade unionists affiliated to the party; (ii) changes in trade union representation (in terms of votes and delegates) and behaviour at the party's annual conference; (iii) changes in the frequency of the meetings of the Joint Council of Labour, at which the executive members of the party and the FOL come together to discuss common interests; and (iv) changes in the proportion of former manual workers and trade union officials in the PLP and in Labour Cabinets.

The second, and rather more ambitious, objective of this study is to elaborate a necessarily multi-causal explanation of the change that has taken place in the level of union involvement in the party. Four historical processes (three of which are located outside of the party), are identified as causal variables and discussed in successive chapters: (i) the enduring, and indeed increasingly exclusive, preoccupation of New Zealand trade unions with economism, and the extent of their ability to attain economistic objectives under conditions of full employment such as have prevailed for virtually the entire post-war period; (ii) the institutionalization of the FOL and the effectiveness with which it has come to function as a more or less typical interest group; and (iv) the growing domination of the rest of the Labour Party by the PLP and the party leadership, which have both become increasingly middle-class.

In Western societies in the course of the twentieth century, important changes have taken place in the relationship of trade unions to the State, in their bargaining power and in the composition of trade union movements.[21] In these chapters we consider the consequences that these changes have had for the level of union involvement in the Labour Party in New Zealand. Then, in conclusion, we contemplate some alternative futures for trade union involvement in the party and inquire briefly into the current health of the Labour Party, in the light of our findings.

Two points remain to be made. The first is that the shortcomings of this study in respect of causation are freely admitted. If the relation between cause and effect at times appears tenuous, then this is at least partly attributable to the non-availability of data and to the fact that when historical processes and their interplay are the subject matter, it is difficult, if not impossible, to control completely for intervening variables. Similarly, again since they are historical processes, it is impossible to measure with any degree of precision the explanatory power of the causal variables, either singly

21. Changes that have occurred in these areas in New Zealand are discussed in Alan Williams, "Trade Unions and Government in New Zealand: Emerging Relationships", in New Zealand Politics: A Reader, ed. Stephen Levine (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1975), pp. 90-93; John M Howells, "Industrial Conflict in New Zealand - The Last Twenty Years", in Labour and Industrial Relations in New Zealand, eds. Howells, Noel S Woods, F J L Young (Carlton, Australia: Pitman, 1974), pp. 161-78; H Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present (Wellington: Reed, 1973), pp. 133-37, 160-63.

or collectively. In any event, the study has no pretensions to anything resembling theoretical status.

Lastly, there are, of course, many facets to the relationship which obtains between trade unions and the New Zealand Labour Party. Of necessity, only some of them can be studied within the confines of a one-paper thesis. The legal factors which affect their relationship, the controversial subject of union financial contributions to the party,[22] union involvement in the party's electorate and regional organizations, the internal decision-making processes of unions in respect of Labour Party affairs - all these facets of the overall union-party relationship have been neglected in the hope that they will be thoroughly investigated by future students.

22. This facet of the union-party relationship has already been studied, although not in great depth. See T W Bentley, "Trade Union Financial Assistance to the NZLP, 1930-60" (MA research essay, University of Auckland, 1973).

CHAPTER I

THE ABANDONMENT OF THE LABOUR PARTY BY THE TRADE UNIONS

I. THE PARTY'S AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP

The proportion of the Labour Party's total membership made up of affiliated trade unionists has increased considerably over the last twenty years. Taking into account the growth in the number of unionized workers, affiliated as well as branch membership of the party has declined in real terms, but the decline in branch membership has been much more precipitous. In total, 184,656 trade union members were affiliated to the Labour Party in 1975, compared with 185,431 in 1940. Branch membership fell over the same period by more than 70 per cent - from 51,174 to 14,247 (see Table 1).

Although not as pronounced as the decline in branch membership, the decline in the proportion of trade union members affiliated to the party in the post-World War II period has also been substantial. The number of trade unionists affiliated to the Labour Party as a proportion of those affiliated to the FOL has halved in the last thirty-five years and, at 48 per cent, is now at its lowest point since

TABLE 1

BRANCH AND AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP

OF THE LABOUR PARTY, 1916-75

Year	Branch	Aff.	Total	% Aff.
1917-18	1,000	10,000	11,000	90.91
1925-26	5,278	40,399	45,667	88.46
1929-30	5,170	45,481	50,651	89.79
1934-35	6,554	24,663	31,217	79.01
1939-40	51,174	185,431	236,605	78.37
1944-45	20,340	136,923	157,263	87.07
1949-50	38,155	174,913	213,068	82.09
1954-55	38,261	135,941	174,202	78.04
1958-59	30,052	142,873	172,925	82.62
1964-65	17,812	167,602	185,414	90.39
1969-70	13,384	189,890	203,274	93.42
1974-75	14,247	184,656	198,903	92.84

SOURCES: NZLP, Annex to the Annual Reports of the National Executive, 1926-48. (Mimeographed). Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1949-75. (Mimeographed).

the FOL was founded in 1937. The 42 per cent of trade unionists registered under the Industrial Relations Act who were members of the party in 1975 compared with almost 75 per cent in 1941. In the post-war period, only during the five years from 1959 to 1964 had a smaller proportion of registered trade union members been affiliated to the party (see Table 2).[1]

Altogether, eighty-one unions and branches of unions were financially affiliated to the Labour Party in May 1975. This total amounted to 36 per cent of the number of unions affiliated to the FOL and to 27 per cent of the number registered under the Industrial Relations Act (see Table 3). Some seventy-six registered unions had formerly been affiliated to the party. With the addition of eight unions and branches of unions nominally, but not financially, affiliated to the party and twelve unions, branches of which had once been affiliated to the party, formerly affiliated unions actually outnumbered those currently affiliated. These unions also contained about 90,000 potential party members.

Even as the number of trade unionists affiliated to the Labour Party increased for a time in the 1960's,

1. The extremely low proportion of all registered trade unionists affiliated to the party from 1959 to 1964 is explained by the temporary defection from the party of the New Zealand Hotel Workers' Federation, whose membership of 21,783 in 1959 exceeded that of any other union affiliated to the party.

TABLE 2

INCIDENCE OF AFFILIATION TO THE LABOUR PARTY AMONG THE UNIONIZED WORK FORCE

Year	Party	FOL[1]	% Aff.	IC & A[2]	% Aff.
1917				67,661	
1918	10,000			71,587	13.97
1919				72,873	
1920				71,447	
1921				82,553	
1922				96,350	
1923				97,719	
1924				96,838	
1925				94,438	
1926	40,399			96,822	41.73
1927	39,992			100,540	39.78
1928				99,667	
1929	42,804			101,071	42.35
1930	45,481			103,980	43.74
1931	44,495			102,646	43.35
1932	41,235			101,526	40.62
1933	34,581			90,526	38.20
1934	28,628			79,283	36.11
1935	24,663			71,888	34.31
1936	24,814			74,391	33.36
1937	53,546			80,929	66.16
1938	139,347	163,402	85.28	185,527	75.11
1939	170,093	178,724	95.17	232,986	73.01
1940	185,431	192,548	96.30	249,231	74.40

TABLE 2 - Continued

Year	Party	FOL	% Aff.	IC & A	% Aff.
1941	190,405	196,909	96.70	254,690	74.76
1942	173,082	194,320	89.07	248,081	69.77
1943	141,085	175,173	80.54	231,049	61.06
1944	130,895	166,810	78.47	218,398	59.93
1945	136,923	175,357	78.08	214,628	63.80
1946	138,911	183,510	75.70	223,027	62.28
1947	130,620	190,000	68.75	229,103	57.01
1948	154,727	188,000	82.30	247,498	62.52
1949	175,837	215,000	81.78	260,379	67.53
1950	174,913	222,000	78.79	271,100	64.52
1951	166,521	193,522	86.05	275,977	60.34
1952	127,244	184,669	68.90	275,779	46.14
1953	133,263	190,000	70.14	272,843	48.84
1954	136,794	194,147	70.46	283,456	48.26
1955	135,941	210,000	64.73	290,149	46.85
1956	134,162	212,000	63.28	299,242	44.83
1957	137,730	207,000	66.54	304,277	45.26
1958	142,097	218,818	64.94	307,619	46.19
1959	142,873	232,160	61.54	317,137	45.05
1960	119,293	238,780	49.96	324,438	36.77
1961		236,500		327,495	
1962		220,000		332,362	
1963		249,333		324,747	
1964	c. 137,000	245,000	55.92	332,801	41.17
1965	167,602	249,189	67.26	334,128	50.16

TABLE 2 - Continued

Year	Party	FOL	% Aff.	IC & A	% Aff.
1966		257,370		346,857	
1967	176,185	293,249	60.08	353,105	49.90
1968	180,874	320,269	56.48	362,760	49.86
1969	181,058	324,362	55.82	366,884	49.35
1970	189,890	318,330	59.65	364,872	52.04
1971	182,314	322,572	56.52	366,436	49.75
1972		340,105		378,465	
1973					
1974					
1975	184,656	383,084	48.20	436,623	42.29

SOURCES: NZLP, Annex to the Annual Reports of the Nattional Executive, 1926-48; Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1949-75. Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, pp. 169-70.

1 As, except in 1975, affiliated unions have been levied and allocated conference votes on the basis of their membership in February the year before (i.e., 15 months before) each annual conference, affiliated membership totals for the party are compared with those for the FOL in the preceding calendar year.

2 Affiliated membership totals for the party are here compared with the total number of trade unionists registered under the IC & A Act (since 1973 under the IR Act) on December 31, 17 months before each annual conference.

TABLE 3

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF NEW ZEALAND TRADE UNIONS AFFILIATED TO THE LABOUR PARTY, 1941-75

Year	D&R[1] Aff.	Nat.[2] Aff.	Total[3]	IC & A	% Aff.
1941	227	15	242	427	56.67
1942	215	15	230	419	54.89
1943	205	15	220	416	52.88
1944				397	
1945	201	15	216	394	54.82
1946	189	14	203	382	53.14
1947	193	13	206	374	55.08
1948	186	15	201	373	53.89
1949	207	14	221	374	59.09
1950	198	15	213	372	57.26
1951	185	16	201	370	54.32
1952	145	14	159	415	38.31
1953	139	14	153	415	36.87
1954	154	13	167	412	40.53
1955	152	13	165	413	39.95
1956	149	13	162	410	39.51
1957	146	13	159	413	38.50
1958	149	13	162	411	39.42
1959	138	13	151	405	37.28
1960				399	
1961				398	
1962				395	
1963				391	
1964				379	

TABLE 3 - Continued

Year	D&R Aff.	Nat. Aff.	Total	IC & A	% Aff.
1965	107	15	122	380	32.11
1966				372	
1967	107	16	123	373	32.98
1968	100	16	116	372	31.18
1969	101	16	117	366	31.97
1970	87	17	104	359	28.97
1971	80	16	96	353	27.20
1972				346	
1973					
1974					
1975	67	14	81	302	26.82

SOURCES: NZLP, Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1941-75. Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, pp. 169-70.

[1] District and regional unions affiliated to the party.

[2] National unions affiliated to the party.

[3] Figures include affiliated branches of non-affiliated unions counted as unions. Unions whose affiliations were not financial have been excluded.

the number of affiliated unions continued to decrease. The incidence of affiliation to the party has declined sharply among unions of biscuit and confectionery employees, clothing-trade employees, coal-miners, drivers, boilermakers and iron and brass moulders, fire-brigades' employees, painters and decorators, shop-assistants and storemen and packers. Only among the waterside workers' unions and, to a lesser extent, among the labourers' unions has the trend been in the opposite direction (see Table 4).

Thus, no "startling upsurge"[2] in union affiliation to the Labour Party took place between 1960 and 1970, although the party's affiliated membership did climb from below 120,000 to almost 190,000. Nine trade unions affiliated or re-affiliated to the party between 1961 and 1965, but after the passage of a second Political Disabilities Removal Act by the Labour Government in 1960, an increase in the number of unions affiliated to the party might have been expected. (This act provided that trade union funds could be put to political purposes with the approval of a majority of voters in a union ballot, whereas between 1950, when the National Government enacted a Political Disabilities Removal Amendment Bill, and 1960, the approval of a majority of the union's financial members had been required.) In fact, more unions

2. Bentley, "Trade Union Financial Assistance to the NZLP", p. 37.

TABLE 4

INCIDENCE OF TRADE UNION AFFILIATION TO THE LABOUR PARTY IN SELECTED CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES, 1945-75

Unions	1945	1950	1955	1959	1965	1970	1975
Biscuit and confectionery employees	4/5	4/5	4/5	3/5	3/4	3/4	1/4
Boilermakers and iron, brass moulders	4/8	5/8	3/8	4/8	3/8	3/8	2/8
Carpenters and related trades	4/5	2/3	2/3	2/3	1/1	1/1	1/1
Clothing-trade employees	5/8	7/7	7/8	7/8	3/7	3/7	3/7
Coal-mine workers and deputies [a]	18/18	22/15	20/13	16/12	15/11	11/9	6/3
Drivers	8/12	9/12	4/15	4/14	3/14	3/14	2/12
Electrical Workers	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	-/2	-/2
Footwear operatives	4/4	4/5	4/4	3/4	3/4	2/4	3/4
Fire-brigades' employees	4/4	3/4	3/5	2/4	-/4	-/5	1/6

TABLE 4 - Continued

Unions	1945	1950	1955	1959	1965	1970	1975
Flour-mill employees	4/6	3/6	5/6	5/6	4/6	1/6	1/6
Freezing workers	8/9	5/5	12/17	7/10	5/10	5/10	2/4[b]
Furniture-trade employees	4/6	4/6	-/5	-/5	-/5	-/5	-/5
Hotel workers	9/9	9/9	9/9	9/9	9/9	9/9	9/9
Labourers	6/10	6/10	6/10	6/10	5/9	5/5	2/4[c]
Laundry employees	2/5	2/5	1/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	2/5
Painters and decorators	4/13	6/14	5/15	4/15	4/15	3/13	-/6
Shop assistants	9/25	11/25	8/25	6/25	3/20	1/18	1/14
Storemen and packers	6/11	6/11	5/11	4/11	3/12	2/11	-/10
Waterside workers	1/1	1/1	6/26	7/24	9/26	12/22	12/20

SOURCES: NZLP, Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1945-75. Department of Labour, Annual Reports (Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1945-70, H.11; 1975, G.1), 1945-75.

TABLE 4 - Continued

NOTE: First figure is for number of unions affiliated to the party in craft or industry. Second figure is for total number of unions in craft or industry.

[a] The number of coal-mine workers' unions affiliated to the party exceeds the cited total for the industry because some of the unions did not register under the IC & A Act and therefore have not been included in the Department of Labour's statistics.

[b] Excludes three party-affiliated branches of the New Zealand Freezing Workers' Union, the majority of whose members were not affiliated to the party.

[c] Excludes one party-affiliated branch of the Wellington, Nelson, Westland and Marlborough Local Bodies and other Labourers' Union, the majority of whose members were not affiliated to the party.

left the party than joined it in the 1960's. Seven-tenths of the increase from 119,293 to 189,890 is attributable to the re-affiliation of the Hotel Workers' Federation in 1965 and to an increase in its size and the size of the largest and third largest unions affiliated to the party, the New Zealand Engineers' and New Zealand Carpenters' unions. What happened essentially in the 1960's was that the party replaced a large number of fairly small unions with a small number of relatively large ones. In 1975, the ten largest affiliated unions accounted for more than 75 per cent of the party's affiliated membership (see Table 5).

II. TRADE UNION REPRESENTATION AND BEHAVIOUR AT CONFERENCE

Measured by changes in the distribution of card votes, trade union representation at the Labour Party's annual conference has declined by about a third in the last half-century. In 1926, trade union delegates possessed 65 per cent of all the card votes cast at conference. In the post-war period, the card-voting strength of the unions has fluctuated, but the overall tendency has been for it to decline - despite the greater fall in the branch than in the affiliated membership of the party. Union delegates cast proportionately fewer card votes at the 1975 conference than they seem to have even in the early 1950's, when, in absolute terms, branch membership was much higher and affiliated membership much lower than they are today (see Table 1). In the

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF THE AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP OF THE LABOUR PARTY, 1975

Union	Members	%	Conference Votes	%
New Zealand Engineers	43,051	23.31	88	21.00
New Zealand Hotel Workers	29,457	15.95	60	14.32
New Zealand Carpenters	15,123	8.19	32	7.64
NUR	11,300	6.12	24	5.73
New Zealand Workers	9,500	5.14	20	4.77
New Zealand Printers	7,000	3.79	15	3.58
Northern Drivers	6,338	3.43	14	3.34
Auckland Freezing Workers	5,787	3.13	13	3.10
Northern and Taranaki Labourers	5,786	3.13	13	3.10
Canterbury Meat Workers	5,699	3.09	13	3.10
Ten largest unions	139,041	75.30	292	69.68
All other unions (71)	45,615	24.70	127	30.32
Total	184,656	100.00	419	100.00

SOURCE: NZLP, "Delegates Attending 1975 Annual Conference," 1975. (Mimeographed).

last decade, the proportion of all card votes cast by union delegates has declined quite sharply - from 57 per cent in 1965 to 43 per cent in 1975 (see Table 6).

But the impact of trade union delegates upon the decisions of conference is much less profound than is indicated by their card-voting strength. In general, union delegates request card votes only on issues about which they are "unusually concerned".[3] Excluding the election of officers, only two or three such votes take place, on average, at each conference.[4] Moreover, they are becoming "increasingly infrequent".[5] The fact that almost all conference decisions are made on voices means, in effect, that affiliated trade unions controlled only 18 per cent of the votes cast on most issues at conference in 1975, compared, for example, with 34 per cent in 1950 and 60 per cent in 1962 (see Table 6). Measured by delegates, rather than by card votes, trade union representation at conference has declined in the last fifty years by almost 75 per cent.

The Labour Party's constituent organizations are represented at conference according to a formula prescribed by the party in its constitution and rules. Whereas one of the principal objectives of affiliated

3. Richard Northey, Interview, Auckland, December 4 1975.

4. Idem, "The Annual Conferences of the New Zealand Labour Party" (M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1973), p. 144.

5. Ibid., p. 339.

TABLE 6

TRADE UNION REPRESENTATION AT CONFERENCE
BY DELEGATES AND CARD VOTES, 1926, 1945-75

Year	Delegates			Card Votes		
	Union	Total	%	Union	Total	%
1926	49	81	60.49	73	112	65.18
1945	186	394	47.21	314	628	50.00
1950	178	528	33.71	382	799	47.81
1955	122	361	33.80	323	689	46.88
1959	115	432	26.62	323	656	49.24
1963	-	280	-	270	521	51.82
1964	-	288	-	320	613	52.20
1965	80	265	30.19	355	619	57.35
1966	-	374	-	394	716	55.03
1967	110	344	31.98	376	670	56.12
1968	103	364	28.30	422	792	53.28
1969	108	372	29.03	409	757	54.03
1970	100	361	27.70	407	737	55.22
1971	92	377	24.40	396	742	53.37
1972	86	402	21.39	393	761	51.64
1973	107	453	23.62	416	858	48.48
1974	-	481	-	404	843	47.92
1975	105	593	17.71	419	968	43.29

SOURCES: NZLP, Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1941-75. "Report of the Credentials Committee" in Reports of the Annual Conference, (Wellington: NZLP), 1963-75.

TABLE 6 - Continued

NOTE: The party has published the distribution of card votes and the number of delegates attending conference only since 1963. All figures for the years 1926-59 and for the number of union delegates from 1926 to 1975 are therefore based upon the author's own calculations from conference delegate and voting entitlement lists and should be regarded as approximate only.

unions in the period before World War II was to secure more favourable terms for their representation at conference and thus greater influence over its decisions, their approach in more recent years has been much more altruistic - even if union delegates will still unite to defeat any proposed constitutional amendment likely to put the unions at a serious disadvantage alongside other organizations represented at conference.

The constitution and programme on the basis of which the Labour Party was founded in 1916 contained no reference to conference, apart from stipulating that it should be convened by the party's national executive in Wellington every July.[6] However, the revised constitution and platform which emerged from the third annual conference of the party in 1919, was rather more specific. LRCs were each to be entitled to send two delegates to conference (a provision which has not subsequently been altered) and organizations affiliated to the party - branches and unions - were to be permitted to send one delegate if they had up to one hundred members, two delegates if they had between one hundred and three hundred, and three if they had more than three hundred.

6. Paul, Humanism in Politics, p. 157.

Each delegate was to have one vote.[7] Obviously, this formula prevented the larger affiliated unions - those with four hundred or more members - from casting a number of votes proportionate to their membership. At the 1925 conference, following the affiliation to the party of the NZWWF and the Wellington Federated Freezing Workers' Union, the national executive recommended that trade unions with more than 1,000 delegates be permitted to send six delegates to conference. The recommendation was incorporated in the party's revised constitution in 1926, although the freezing workers, for example, sent six delegates even in 1925. With 4,698 and 2,553 members respectively, the waterside workers' and freezing workers' federations were by far the largest groups of organized workers then affiliated to the party.

Some trade unions did not yet regard the conference representation formula as satisfactory. In 1930, the AOL expressed the view that the trade unions should determine Labour Party policy.[8] The NZWWF, whose leader, James Roberts, was also secretary of the AOL, sought simultaneously to increase the power of conference and to increase the ability of affiliated unions to influence

7. NZLP, "Constitution and Platform" in Conferences, Wellington: July 1919 (Wellington: Maoriland Worker, 1919), p. 44.

8. P. J. O'Farrell, Harry Holland: Militant Socialist (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1964), p. 199.

its decisions. In 1928, it moved that the party leader be elected by conference. However, this motion, and similar ones in 1929 and 1930, were defeated.[9] At its initiative, the 1931 conference set up a special committee, comprising representatives from the waterside workers' and seamen's unions and two representatives from the PLP, to work out a new representation formula. Although the two union representatives at first pressed for the introduction of a full card-voting system, the committee finally agreed to recommend a system which, although modified, nevertheless increased the voting strength of unions so that it was "more commensurate with their size"[10] and made them considerably more influential in policy formulation.

Except for one amendment, the formula for representation at conference evolved in 1931 remained unchanged until 1974. That single amendment, however, was of profound importance in the history of the Labour Party, for it enabled the party leadership, with large-scale trade union support, to expel from the party one of the leaders of its 'left-wing', John A. Lee (see chapter five).

9. Ibid., p. 198.

10. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 174. Branches and unions were allocated one delegate and one vote each if they had up to 200 members, two delegates and two votes if they had between 200 and 500, three delegates and three votes if they had between 500 and 1,000, and four delegates and four votes if their membership exceeded 1,000, but was less than 2,000. One extra delegate or vote was permitted for each additional 500 members, but no delegate was permitted to exercise more than four votes.

As a result of an amendment proposed by the party's national executive in 1940 and approved by conference when it adopted the executive's annual report, affiliated trade unions had to send only four delegates to conference from 1940 onwards to be able to exercise their entire potential vote. The rule that no delegate could exercise more than four votes was, at this point, discarded.

The outcome of a further revision of the party's constitution and rules undertaken in 1974 was quite different. On this occasion, although they first had to defeat a perceived attempt substantially to reduce trade union influence upon the decisions of conference, trade unionists and others of 'trade union persuasion' on the party's national executive actually conceived a new formula which strengthened branch representation - at a time when, in real terms, union representation was already on the decline.

The 1973 conference instructed the standing constitution committee of the national executive to redraft the constitution and submit its proposals to conference for consideration in 1974. The committee at that time consisted of the party president, Wallace Rowling; the secretary, John Wybrow; Stan Rodger; and Roger Douglas and Trevor Young, who, like Rowling, were both MPs.[11] Significantly, no members of the committee had backgrounds

11. NZLP, Report of the Fifty-seventh Annual Conference (Wellington: NZLP, 1973), p. 7.

in unions affiliated to the party. It is not clear whether this committee began the task of revising the constitution, but, according to a trade unionist on the national executive, the PLP attempted substantially to reduce the influence of trade unions at conference.[12] Its proposals, however, were "totally unacceptable"[13] to the national executive, on which trade unions are invariably well represented. At its first meeting after conference, the executive appointed a new committee, which comprised the new president of the party, Dr Charles Bennett, a former public servant; Douglas; and three members who could be described as being of 'trade union persuasion': an MP, Michael Moore, a former printer and trade unionist; an industrial relations lecturer and former unionist in the public sector, Edward Keating; and the secretary of the Wellington branch of the Engineers' Union, Brian Landers.[14] This committee drafted the revised constitution which was placed before conference in 1974 and contained the amendment providing for increased branch representation.

Effective from March 1, 1975, the revised constitution established separate representation ratios for unions and branches. While the ratio established in 1940 was retained for unions, branches are now entitled to two votes if they have more than 75 members or three

12. Gerry Ditchfield, Interview, Wellington, January 16, 1975.

13. Ditchfield, Interview.

14. NZLP, Report of the Fifty-eighth Annual Conference (1974), p. 44.

if they have more than 125. Unions must still have at least 500 to be able to cast three.[15] The new ratio of representation for branches increased their share of the overall card vote at conference by more than four per cent and reduced the unions' share by more than three (see Table 7).

TABLE 7

EFFECT OF 1974 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT UPON DISTRIBUTION OF CONFERENCE CARD VOTES, 1975

		Old Constitution (Hypothetical)		New Constitution (Actual)	
		Votes	%	Votes	%
80	LECs[a]	159	17.65	159	16.43
4	MRCs[b]	4	0.44	4	0.41
7	RCs	14	1.55	14	1.45
310	branches ..	299	33.19	366	37.81
47	unions ..	419	46.50	419	43.29
1	LWC[d]	6	0.67	6	0.62

SOURCE: NZLP, Report of the Fifty-ninth Annual Conference (1975), p. 56.

a Labour Electorate Committees, which superseded the LRCs.
b Metropolitan Representation Committees.
c Regional Councils.
d Labour Women's Council.

From the fact that trade unionists were instrumental in securing more favourable terms for the representation of branches at conference, it is possible to conclude that unions, as protective as they are of the fundamental status quo, do not now aspire to dominate conference.

15. NZLP, Constitution and Rules, revised ed. (Wellington: NZLP, 1975), p. 30.

"We could take it over and dominate it, but we don't want to",[16] is how one trade unionist in the leadership of the extra-parliamentary party assesses their current attitude. Other developments point in the same direction. Since the 1950's, for instance, the proportion of conference remits originating from trade unions has declined.[17] Affiliated unions sponsored only 8.4 per cent of all remits considered by conference in the nine years from 1963 to 1971 inclusive[18] and exactly half that proportion, 4.2 per cent, while the third Labour Government was in office from 1973 to 1975.[19] Between 1963 and 1975, the Engineers' Union, with 23 per cent of the party's affiliated membership, supplied only 13.5 per cent of all union remits; the traditionally class-conscious affiliates, the waterside workers', seamen's and miners' unions, only fifteen remits combined; and the New Zealand Hotel Workers' Federation and the

16. Ditchfield, Interview.

17. Northey, Interview.

18. About 23 per cent of the union remits in this period related mainly to industrial relations, 13 per cent to social security and health, 12 per cent to trade and industry, and 9 per cent to finance and taxation. See Northey, "The Annual Conference of the NZLP", pp. 101-04.

19. Unions have always sent fewer remits to conference than is commensurate with their proportion of the party membership, total conference card vote and all conference delegates. Annual conference remit papers show, for example, that unions contributed 11 out of 81 remits (13.6%) in 1923 and 29 out of 133 remits (21.8%) in 1924. But they still contributed proportionately more remits then than they do now.

New Zealand Workers' and Auckland Freezing Workers' unions none at all. (See Table 8). Affiliated unions evidently attach very little importance to having their policy preferences adopted by conference. Even the Auckland Boilermakers' Union, which contributed more remits than any other union, spends very little time discussion Labour Party politics at its meetings.[20]

Although they sponsor very few remits, the largest affiliated unions are seldom unrepresented at conference and generally send the four delegates they require if they are to be able to exercise their full card vote. In so far as representation at conference is concerned, the critical variable which emerged in an analysis of union representation at conference for the years from 1969 to 1971 was union size: as a rule, the larger the the union, the more likely it was to be represented at conference (see Table 9).[21] Thus, although only about 48 per cent, on average, of the unions affiliated to the party were represented at the 1969, 1970 and 1971 conferences, about 78 per cent of the unions' potential card vote was exercised. As the average size of unions in New Zealand has increased, so have the unions exercised a greater proportion of the conference votes to which they are entitled: 61 per cent in 1945, 64 per cent in 1950, 69 per cent in 1955, 71 per cent in 1959,

20. John Finlay, Interview, Auckland, December 8, 1975.

21. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", pp. 86-88.

TABLE 8

ORIGINS OF TRADE UNION CONFERENCE REMITS, 1963-75

Union	Years Sent	No. of Remits	% Union Remits	% All Remits
Auckland Boilermakers	6	78	20.26	1.28
ASRS (NUR)	11	73	18.96	1.19
New Zealand Engineers	11	52	13.51	0.85
New Zealand Railway Tradesmen	5	40	10.39	0.65
Canterbury Footwear Operatives	10	34	8.83	0.56
New Zealand Printers	4	16	4.16	0.26
Dunedin Footwear Operatives	5	13	3.38	0.21
New Zealand Carpenters	3	13	3.38	0.21
Canterbury Meat Workers	3	11	2.86	0.18
Tomoana Freezing Workers	1	11	2.86	0.18
Auckland Waterside Workers	3	7	1.82	0.11
Northern and Taranaki Labourers	3	6	1.56	0.10
Northern Drivers	2	6	1.56	0.10

TABLE 8 - Continued

Union	Years Sent	No. of Remits	% Union Remits	% All Remits
Canterbury Rubber Workers	2	5	1.30	0.08
Wellington Waterside Workers	1	5	1.30	0.08
N.Z. Tramway Employees	1	4	1.04	0.07
Canterbury Drivers	2	2	0.52	0.03
Canterbury Woollen Mill Employees	1	2	0.52	0.03
Runanga State Miners	1	2	0.52	0.03
Wellington Labourers	1	2	0.52	0.03
Napier Waterside Workers	1	1	0.26	0.02
Otago Iron and Brass Moulders	1	1	0.26	0.02
Wellington Cool Store Employees	1	1	0.26	0.02
Total	78	385	100.00	6.29

SOURCES: NZLP, Annual Conference Remit Papers (Wellington: NZLP), 1972-75. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 109.

TABLE 9

TRADE UNION SIZE AND REPRESENTATION AT CONFERENCE, 1969-71

Unions	No. Aff.	% Rep.	% Potential Vote Cast	% Union Vote	% Union Delegates
1 - 50 members	15.0	15.5	15.5	0.6	2.3
51 - 125 members	13.7	14.6	14.6	0.5	2.0
126 - 200 members	13.0	30.8	30.8	1.0	3.9
201 - 300 members	8.7	46.1	46.1	2.1	5.9
301 - 500 members	12.0	33.0	33.0	2.1	5.2
501 - 1000 members	15.0	73.3	73.3	8.6	15.4
1001 - 2000 members	13.0	69.3	69.0	9.7	15.7
2001 - 5000 members	6.0	83.3	83.9	10.4	14.1
5001 - 10,000 members	4.3	82.8	79.9	12.8	8.2
Over 10,000 members	5.0	100	97.0	52.3	27.2
NZ Engineers	1	100	100	18.4	6.6
NZ Hotel Workers	1	100	100	15.2	5.6
NZ Carpenters	1	100	78	5.8	3.9
ASRS (NUR)	1	100	100	6.7	6.6
NZ Workers	1	100	100	6.3	4.6
Akld. Freezing Workers	1	100	74	3.1	1.3
Northern Drivers	1	100	53	2.1	1.3
NZ Printers	1	100	100	3.4	3.6
Nthrn. & Taranaki Labourers	1	100	92	3.1	2.3
Canterbury Meat Workers	1	100	100	3.0	1.0
All unions	105.7	47.7	77.7	100	25.1

SOURCE: Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", pp. 86-87.

73 per cent in 1965, 80 per cent in 1970 and 90 per cent in 1975.[22]

For the smaller unions, representation at conference may often be "a financial impossibility".[23] Consequently, some delegates represent two or more unions, a union and a branch, a union and a branch and an LEC, or, as in the case of one trade unionist in 1972, all three, plus a Divisional Area Council.[24] Delegates accredited to more than one union or to a union and one or more other organizations accounted for 4.1 per cent of all conference delegates between 1966 and 1971.[25] In addition, some LEC delegates are trade unionists. MPs sometimes represent unions located in their electorates - before he became Prime Minister, for example, Wallace Rowling regularly represented the Denniston Miners' Union in his electorate of Buller. An MP need not even come from the same electorate as the union to be able to represent it. In 1968, for example, the leader of the party, Norman Kirk, whose electorate was Sydenham, represented the Wellington Caretakers' and Cleaners' Union. Nothing in the party's constitution and rules requires a union to choose its delegate or delegates from either its membership or leadership.

22. NZLP, Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1945-75.

23. John Wybrow, Interview, Wellington, December 18, 1975.

24. E. Hemmingsen, a Timber Workers' Union delegate.

25. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 97.

Given that very few of them are interested in sponsoring remits for endorsement by conference, why, then, do unions bother to send delegates at all? For its part, the Auckland Boilermakers' Union sends delegates to conference to "express the sentiments of the union's quarterly stop-work meetings"[26] - and to try to have conference support remits in which those sentiments are embodied. As we have seen, however, the Boilermakers' Union is quite atypical of the unions affiliated to the party. A far greater number of union delegates appear to see their presence as "a means of assimilating the attitudes expressed and decisions made at conference for communication to their rank-and-file, an opportunity to influence the composition of the executive, and a watching brief from which they can intervene if necessary to defend their interests".[27] They do not contrive to dominate conference. Block voting by union delegates is even more exceptional than are card votes. Except on some industrial relations and party constitutional reform issues, and in the election of officers to the leadership of the extra-parliamentary party, the views of trade union delegates, as expressed in their voting behaviour, are "just as varied as those of other delegates".[28] Union delegations do not formulate policies which are binding

26. Finlay, Interview.

27. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", pp. 335-36.

28. Ibid., p. 196.

on all their members on issues which do not directly affect trade unions. On these, the attitudes of the individual delegates are expressed.[29] Block voting by unions does characterize the election of officers, most of those unions with substantial votes having been committed "by their union conference, executive or a caucus among their delegates"[30] to cast a block vote for particular candidates. In the contest for the party vice-presidency at the 1974 conference, a defeated candidate, Jonathan Hunt, claims that Gerald O'Brien, who won the election, received all the more than 80 votes cast by the Engineers' Union, whose delegates had decided to support O'Brien, instead of Hunt, 'en masse' by only twelve votes to ten.[31]

One former trade unionist and MP has observed, confessing his cynicism, that trade union delegates attend Labour Party conferences to get "an extra week's holiday on full pay".[32] This impression is, at best, distorted and, at worst, perhaps entirely incorrect, but it is not surprising that it should be gained in the case of a majority of union delegates. 'Passive' and 'defensive' are the adjectives which best sum up

29. Ibid. Also Ditchfield, Interview.

30. Ibid., p. 218.

31. Jonathan Hunt, Interview, Wellington, December 10, 1975. Hunt's testimony, however, is unreliable. The Engineers' Union has never sent more than about twelve delegates to conference.

32. Norman Douglas, Interview, Auckland, December 8, 1975.

the role that trade unions have chosen to perform at conference. Sponsoring very few remits, they do not see conference as a forum at which they can commit the party leadership to the policies that they prefer. Preferring to further their interests mainly by other means, they oversee proceedings at conference to ensure that remits which might prove contrary to trade union interests are not passed.[33]

The chief reason why some unions are not represented at conference and why most of those which are represented are inactive appear to be twofold. Firstly, almost all the unions affiliated to the Labour Party are also affiliated to the FOL, which holds its annual conference, also at Wellington, the week before the party's. Unions find the FOL conference rather more "effective, ... more direct"[34] as a vehicle for the furtherance of their policy objectives. Unions can see what eventually becomes of the remits that they send to the FOL Conference - a few, for example, will become the subject of deputations to Cabinet ministers. On the other hand, some remits sent to the Labour Party Conference "never see the light of day".[35] Thus, trade unions are more likely to be represented and more likely to be active at the FOL Conference than at the Labour Party's. The former, to some extent, is a substitute for the latter.

33. Northey, Interview.

34. Ditchfield, Interview. Also Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 335.

35. Ditchfield, Interview.

Secondly, the influence of the annual conference is much more limited than is suggested by its designation in the party's constitution as "the supreme governing body of the party".[36] Its role in reality is "to discuss policy, not to formulate it".[37] Consequently, the remits that conference endorses find their way into the party's election manifesto only if they fit in with its "general tone".[38] Thus, the majority of endorsed remits do not, in the end, become party policy. Since the Labour Party was first elected into office, policy-making has increasingly become the prerogative of the PLP. But trade union representation in the PLP has also steadily declined.

III. THE JOINT COUNCIL OF LABOUR

Consultation between the Labour Party and the industrial wing of the labour movement in New Zealand was first formalized in 1926. In that year, the Labour Party Conference endorsed a remit from the NZWWF recommending the establishment of a committee, on which the AOL, the TLCF, the Labour Party national executive and the PLP would be represented, to "discuss and arrive at decisions on all questions affecting industrial legislation brought before Parliament".[39]

36. NZLP, Constitution and Rules, revised ed., p. 4.

37. Wybrow, Interview.

38. Wybrow, Interview.

39. NZLP, Report of the Tenth Annual Conference (1926), p. 40.

The result of the waterside workers' remit was the National Labour Legislation Committee, (NLLC), which comprised three representatives of the AOL, three of the TLCF, and two each from the national executive and Parliamentary wing of the Labour Party. Between 1926 and 1935, before Labour came to power, the PLP generally submitted its proposed bills to the committee for discussion and approval and consulted it before determining its attitude toward industrial legislation proposed by the Reform, United and Coalition governments.[40] But the committee did not long survive the election of a Labour Government. In 1937, the TLCF and the AOL merged into the FOL. To the extent that the FOL's leaders had direct access to Labour Cabinet ministers, the need for the NLLC was obviated. While Peter Fraser was Prime Minister, FOL representatives even attended party caucus meetings.[41]

The event which precipitated the formation of the Joint Council of Labour (JCL), the NLLC's successor, was the 1951 waterfront dispute, which incited unprecedented hostility between the party and the FOL (see chapter four). Responding to an initiative from Angus McLagan, a former FOL president and Labour Cabinet minister, the FOL and Labour Party conferences in 1952 decided to set up a body at which members of the respective national executives could meet "for the purpose of ensuring that a common policy is

40. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 130.

41. Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 156.

adopted on matters affecting the labour movement ..."[42] At the same time, neither organization was meant to try to coerce the other into accepting the 'common policy' that it proposed. The council resolved at its inaugural meeting that: "As the New Zealand Federation of Labour and the New Zealand Labour Party are both self-/sic/ autonomous bodies, the functions of the Joint Council shall be purely advisory".[43]

Having decided at the outset to meet monthly, the JCL lived up to its resolution for the first five months of its existence, but thereafter met increasingly infrequently and irregularly. Conscious of this fact, its members twice re-affirmed their determination to meet monthly - in September 1955 and October 1958 - and then resolved after the 1964 conferences that the council should "meet regularly on a quarterly basis with the proviso that intermediate meetings shall be convened when considered necessary by the joint presidents and secretaries".[44] But the frequency of the council's meetings declined as if none of the resolutions had been passed. It met on twenty-two occasions between 1952 and 1957, on thirteen occasions between 1958 and 1963, on eight occasions between 1964 and 1969, and only twice in the six-year period from 1970 to 1975 (see Table 10). In a formal sense at least, co-operation between the Labour Party and the FOL is now at a very low ebb.

42. NZLP, "Industrial Relations Policy", 1952. (Mimeographed.)

43. JCL, Minutes of Meetings, 1952-66, meeting of July 21, 1952. (Typewritten.)

44. NZLP, Report of the Forty-eighth Annual Conference (1964), p. 8.

TABLE 10

CONFIRMED MEETINGS OF THE JOINT COUNCIL OF LABOUR, 1952-75

Year	No.	Year	No.	Year	No.
1952	5 [a]	1960	1	1968	1
1953	4	1961	3	1969	1
1954	3	1962	1	1970	-
1955	4	1963	3	1971	-
1956	3	1964	1	1972	1
1957	3	1965	2	1973	1
1958	3	1966	3	1974	-
1959	2	1967	-	1975	-

SOURCES: Joint Council of Labour, Minutes of Meetings, 1952-66. FOL, Annual Report of the Zealand Federation of Labour (Wellington: Standard Press), 1953-75. NZLP, Annual Report of the New Zealand Executive (Wellington: NZLP), 1953-75.

[a] The council did not meet, of course, until July 1952.

In practice, the functions of the JCL have become increasingly narrow. The topics that the council discussed up until 1963 were numerous and diverse - they included immigration; compulsory unionism, the Arbitration Court, and the arbitration system; economic stabilization regulations, the cost-of-living, and general wage-order applications; trust control of breweries; social security and superannuation; Saturday trading; defence and disarmament; the Soviet invasion of Hungary; the Suez crisis; the 1960 All Blacks' tour of South Africa; and the possibility of the entry of Britain into the European Economic Community.[45] Since 1963, the council's deliberations have been confined almost solely to remits referred to it by two conferences and, triennially, to the Labour Party's industrial relations policy[46] and trade union financial contributions to the party's election campaign fund.[47] From 1938 to 1963, the Labour Party sent almost all the industrial relations remits from its

45. JCL, Minutes of Meetings, 1952-63.

46. The JCL played a major part in the formulation of the Labour Party's industrial relations policy in 1963, 1966 and 1969 at least. See JCL, minutes of meeting of April 1963; FOL, 1967 Annual Report; NZLP, Report of the Fifty-fourth Annual Conference (1970), pp. 5-6. For an account of how it did not help formulate Labour's industrial relations policy in 1975, see chapter five.

47. This assessment of the current functions of the JCL correlates with that of the Labout Party's general secretary, who says it exists mainly (i) to help win elections, and (ii) to consider remits referred to it by the two conferences. Wybrow, Interview.

constituent organizations directly to the FOL for its recommendations. If this practice had not been discontinued, it is probable that the JCL would by now have lost its 'raison d'etre'.[48]

The FOL attributed the council's failure to meet in 1970 and 1971 to the burdensome demands that had been made on the labour movement's time by the National Government and its 'anti-working-class' legislation.[49] Its testimony is supported by the general secretary of the Labour Party, who emphasizes how difficult it is to bring a dozen or more "very busy"[50] people together for a JCL meeting. Moreover, while the third Labour Government was in office, the leaders of the FOL and Labour Cabinet ministers were in "continuous [sic] contact"[51] and there was thus little need for the council to meet. Yet neither explanation is convincing. The executive members of the party and the FOL have not become so much more busy that where they were once able to meet almost four times annually, they can now meet only triennially. In addition, the JCL met no more frequently in the last Parliamentary term in which the Labour Party was in opposition than it did when Labour was in power - in each term only once.

48. For reasons as to why this practice ceased, see Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 152. They are not important in the context of this discussion.
49. FOL, Annual Reports, 1971, p. 52; 1972, p. 53.
50. Wybrow, Interview.
51. Wybrow, Interview.

How, then, is the increasing obsolescence of the JCL to be explained? According to one account, the party has been "dragging its feet"[52] because the FOL has habitually used the council to impose its policies on the political wing, as in the case of the joint statement opposing the New Zealand commitment in Vietnam in 1966. But this is probably true more of the days in which Fintan Patrick Walsh led the FOL than of today. Two members of the Labour Party's national executive who are nominally members of the council assert that it is the FOL's reluctance which prevents the council from meeting more often.[53] The FOL has lost interest in the council because of its "growing ability to realize its objectives independently of the Labour Party",[54] while, on the party's side, there are fewer former trade unionists in Parliament and consequently fewer MPs interested in maintaining the party's traditional association with the trade union movement. The FOL's president, Sir Thomas Skinner, is described as "very coy"[55] in his attitude toward the JCL and its effective operation and as a pragmatist in the sense that he likes to be able to deal as easily with a National Government as with a Labour Government. The fact that the frequency of the JCL's meetings declined

52. Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 157.

53. Stan Rodger, Interview, Wellington, January 16, 1975. Also Ditchfield, Interview.

54. Ditchfield, Interview.

55. Rodger, Interview.

very sharply at about the time that Sir Thomas became president of the FOL in 1973 tends to validate these analyses. We may therefore conclude tentatively that trade union, more than party, reluctance has brought about the decline of the institution which was to bring together the leaders of industrial and political labour and unite them in their views.

IV. TRADE UNIONISTS IN THE PARLIAMENTARY LABOUR PARTY

The purpose of the Labour Party's annual conference is thus to discuss, rather than to formulate policy and the JCL, which builds the trade union movement into the party's policy-making process, is, in effect, in recess. If trade unions are to influence party policy other than by pressure group tactics, overt or covert, they must, therefore, be represented in the PLP.

Unlike their British counterparts, New Zealand trade unions do not 'sponsor' Labour Party election candidates.[56] Consequently, once a trade union member or official becomes an MP in New Zealand, there is little doubt that his primary loyalty is to the PLP: "He acts as a Labour MP".[57] Although he may have secured the party's nomination with the aid of trade unionists on the candidate selection panel, individual ambition, rather than the organized efforts of his union, will have motivated him to

56. 'Sponsorship' involves a union in sustaining the finances of a constituency organization of the party in return for its adoption of the candidate that the union recommends. See Martin Harrison, Trade Unions and the Labour Party Since 1945 (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960), pp. 273-79.

57. Hunt, Interview.

contest it. In any case, sponsorship as it is practised in Britain is "less a means of achieving precise policy objectives than of maintaining a distinctive trade union and working-class presence"[58] on the Labour Party benches. In policy conflicts between the trade union movement and the PLP, most sponsored MPs side with the party.[59]

New Zealand trade unions have often quarrelled bitterly with politicians who rose from their ranks, with former prominent trade unionists such as Fraser, McLagan and Robert Semple. According to Michels, such conflict is caused essentially by the psychological transformation of working-class political leaders. Irrespective of their social origins, leaders tend to draw together with the exercise of responsibility and become "a leader class".[60] Duverger argues that tension between the Parliamentary and extra-parliamentary wings of socialist working-class parties is natural:

> Socially the parliamentary representatives become, from the working-class militants' point of view, members of the middle class. A working-class deputy /MP/ is always more of a deputy than a member of the working class - and as time passes he becomes less and less working class and more and more of a deputy ... More than the income figure it is the general mode of existence which separates the member of parliament and the militants. Through his surroundings, his connections, and his contacts the deputy leads a typically middle-class existence. The general atmosphere of parliament is a middle-class atmosphere.[61]

58. Harrison, "Trade Unions and the Labour Party", in Pressure Groups in Britain, eds. Richard Kimber and J J Richardson (London: Dent, 1974), p. 71.

59. William D Muller, "Union - MP Conflict: An Overview", Parliamentary Affairs 26 (Summer 1973): 336-55 passim.

60. See Duverger, Political Parties, pp. 159-60.

61. Ibid., pp. 190-91. It is arguable, of course, that MPs, far from leading a 'typically middle-class' existence, become part of a much more exclusive social elite.

In the light of Duverger's observations, it is perhaps significant that relations between the PLP and the trade union movement were most strained in precisely those years when the average length of service of the trade union MPs was at its greatest - in the late 1940's and early 1950's (see Table 11).

TABLE 11

AVERAGE LENGTH OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE OF TRADE UNION MPS

Years		Years		Years	
1919:	0.3	1938:	10.3	1957:	10.0
1922:	1.6	1943:	11.7	1960:	9.5
1925:	5.5	1946:	10.8	1963:	9.2
1928:	6.2	1949:	13.4	1966:	9.8
1931:	7.6	1951:	12.75	1969:	9.0
1935:	7.0	1954:	8.7	1972:	8.7
		1975:	9.5		

NOTE: Calculations are on the basis of length of Parliamentary career immediately after each General Election and include newly-elected MPs.

Conversely, trade union leaders have sometimes established very harmonious working relationships with party leaders such as Hugh Watt, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour from 1972 to 1974, who, although once active in the Engineers' Union, had been a businessman for some years before he entered Parliament in 1954. In 1974 and 1975, trade unions were also the principal supporters of Gerald O'Brien, a businessman, in his successful candidature for the party ordinary, and then senior, vice-presidency. There is thus no 'iron law'

that former trade unionists in the PLP will concur with trade union policy objectives or that those with other backgrounds will not, and there is no inseparable or even identifiable trade union faction in the party caucus.[62] This casts doubt upon the entire notion that trade union MPs might represent trade union interests in any direct sense. The most that appears to be expected of trade union MPs is that they should possess and demonstrate an ability to empathize with the attitudes and behaviour of the leaders and members of the industrial wing of the movement.[63]

Irrespective of whether or not they 'represent' trade unions, the proportion of Labour MPs with union backgrounds declined from almost 90 per cent after the first General Election that the party contested in 1919 to 27 per cent, its nadir, in 1972 (see Table 12). Between 1972 and 1975, manual workers and trade union officials were outnumbered in the PLP by members of another occupational category, those who had been professionally employed.[64] The trend, however, has not been uniform. There were proportionately more trade unionists in Parliament in 1966 than in 1938 and almost as few in 1957 as in 1975, although the

62. Douglas, Interview; Hunt, Interview. Also Edward Isbey, Interview, Wellington, December 11, 1975.

63. Isbey, Interview.

64. After the 1975 General Election, the number of former trade unionists in the PLP temporarily equalled the number of 'professionals'. In early 1976, however, the MP for Nelson, Sir Stanley Whitehead, a former trade unionist, died and was succeeded in Parliament by a businessman, Melvin Courtney. At this point, 31.25% of the members of the PLP were 'professionals', 28.1% manual workers or trade union officials, 21.9% businessmen or farmers, 12.5% public servants, and 6.25% white-collar workers.

TABLE 12

OCCUPATIONAL ORIGINS OF MEMBERS
OF THE PLP, 1919-75

Year		TU [1]		WCW [2]		PS [3]		PROF. [4]		B-F [5]
1919	7	87.5	1	12.5	-	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0
1922	14	82.3	1	5.9	-	0.0	1	5.9	1	5.9
1925	9	75.0	1	8.3	-	0.0	1	8.3	1	8.3
1928	14	73.7	-	0.0	-	0.0	3	15.8	2	10.5
1931	17	70.7	1	4.2	-	0.0	5	20.8	1	4.2
1935	24	45.3	1	1.9	-	0.0	11	20.7	17	32.1
1938 [6]	23	43.4	2	3.8	-	0.0	14	26.4	13	24.5
1943	22	48.9	2	4.4	1	2.2	9	20.0	11	24.4
1946	21	50.0	2	4.8	2	4.8	8	19.0	9	21.4
1949	16	47.1	2	5.9	3	8.8	7	20.6	6	17.6
1951	12	40.0	3	10.0	2	6.6	7	23.3	6	20.0
1954	12	34.3	3	8.6	6	17.1	10	28.6	4	11.4
1957	13	31.7	5	12.2	7	17.1	11	26.8	5	12.2

TABLE 12 - Continued

Year	TU		WCW		PS		PROF.		B-F	
1960	15	44.1	3	8.8	4	11.8	8	23.5	4	11.8
1963	14	40.0	4	11.4	4	11.4	10	28.6	3	8.6
1966	16	45.7	3	8.6	2	5.7	10	28.6	4	11.4
1969	13	32.5	3	7.5	5	12.5	10	25.0	9	22.5
1972	15	27.3	5	9.1	6	10.9	17	30.9	12	21.8
1975	10	31.25	2	6.25	4	12.5	10	31.25	6	18.75

SOURCES: Who's Who in New Zealand, 3rd, 4th, 5th eds., edited by G.H. Scholefield (Wellington: Rangatira Press (1924), Watkins (1941), Reed (1951); 6th ed., edited by Frank A. Simpson (Wellington: Reed, 1956); 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th eds., edited by G.C. Petersen (Wellington: 1961, 1964, 1968, 1971). General Assembly Library, Biographical Files.

[1] Manual workers (all of whom were trade union members) and trade union officials.

[2] White-collar workers.

[3] Public servants.

[4] Professionals.

[5] Businessmen and farmers.

[6] One MP, Mrs Catherine Stewart (Wellington West), who was a housewife, has not been categorized.

proportion of the party's thirty safest seats occupied by former trade unionists declined between 1935 and 1975 by over 50 per cent (see Table 13).

Interruptions in the overall decline in the proportion of trade unionists in the PLP are largely explained by the party's changing electoral fortunes. When the party wins well, as it did in 1935, 1938 and 1972, the trade unionist component in the PLP generally becomes proportionately smaller with the entry of successful, professionally or self-employed candidates from the marginal, usually mixed rural-urban, seats. When the party loses leavily and the size of the PLP declines, as happened in 1960 and 1975, its trade unionist component tends to increase, because trade union MPs hold proportionately more safe urban seats than MPs with other backgrounds (see table in appendices). The crushing defeat inflicted upon the party in the 1975 election increased the trade unionist component in the PLP only minimally (and temporarily), but it did leave unionists in possession of over half of the party's remaining safe seats. The fact that unionists have been chosen to occupy nine of twenty safe Labour seats that have become vacant in the last fifteen years indicates that the influence of affiliated trade unions in the selection of candidates has remained fairly constant.[65]

65. The group of nine MPs, with the swing against the party to which their seats were vulnerable when they were selected as candidates, comprised: Ronald Bailey (Heretaunga, 17.7%), Norman Douglas (Auckland Central, 12.7%), Sir Basil Arthur (Timaru, which was vulnerable to a 1.1% swing in 1962, but which had been held by Labour since 1928), Matiu Rata (Northern Maori, 13.4%), Fraser Colman (Petone, 7.8%), Paraone Reweti (Eastern Maori, 10.4%), Edwin Isbey (Grey Lynn, 15.8%), Mary Batchelor (Avon, 19.3%) and John Kirk (Sydenham, 21.4%).

TABLE 13

OCCUPATIONAL ORIGINS OF MEMBERS OF THE PLP
IN 30 SAFEST LABOUR SEATS, 1935-75

	TU		WCW		PS		PROF.		B-F	
1935	19	63.33	1	3.33	-	0.00	6	20.00	4	13.33
1938	17	56.67	2	6.67	-	0.00	7	23.33	4	13.33
1943	18	60.00	2	6.67	1	3.33	6	20.00	3	10.00
1946	19	63.33	2	6.67	2	6.67	4	13.33	3	10.00
1949	14	46.67	2	6.67	2	6.67	7	23.33	5	16.67
1951	12	40.00	3	10.00	2	6.67	7	23.33	6	20.00
1954	10	33.33	3	10.00	4	13.33	9	30.00	4	13.33
1957	10	33.33	4	13.33	4	13.33	9	30.00	3	10.00
1960	12	40.00	3	10.00	4	13.33	7	23.33	4	13.33
1963	13	43.33	3	10.00	3	10.00	8	26.67	3	10.00
1966	13	43.33	2	6.67	2	6.67	10	33.33	3	10.00
1969	12	40.00	2	6.67	3	10.00	7	23.33	6	20.00
1972	9	30.00	2	6.67	4	13.33	9	30.00	6	20.00
1975	9	30.00	2	6.67	4	13.33	9	30.00	6	20.00

SOURCES: Who's Who in New Zealand, all eds. General Assembly Library, Biographical Files.

As the proportion of former trade unionists in the PLP has declined, so, too, has the proportion of trade unionists moving 'sideways' into Parliament from positions of leadership in the industrial wing of the movement. Of all the trade unionists who have entered Parliament in the post-war period, only four had previously achieved eminence in the trade union movement.[66] A career in politics seems to have appealed much more strongly to the leaders of industrial labour before World War II. After the 1935 election, the PLP contained not only seven former presidents and vice-presidents of provincial trades councils, but also six former leaders of the short-lived, syndicalist-oriented 'Red' Federation of Labour. Five of the six - Fraser, a member of the federation's national executive; Patrick Webb, its president from 1910 to 1912; Semple, president in 1908 and 1909 and thereafter full-time organizer; William Parry, vice-president in 1911 and 1912; and Hubert Armstrong, vice-president in 1908 and 1909 and later a member of the executive - were Cabinet ministers in the first Labour Government.[67]

66. The four were McLagan (Riccarton, 1946-56), president of the United Mine Workers' Union and, at its inauguration, of the FOL; William Fox (Miramar, 1954-66), vice-president of the FOL; Isbey (Grey Lynn, 1969-), president of the NZWWF, 1957-68; and Douglas (Auckland Central, 1960-75), secretary of the Auckland Trades Council and vice-president of the Auckland District Council of the FOL.

67. Another Cabinet minister, Mark Fagan, leader of the Legislative Council, had also been a member of the national executive of the 'Red' Federation. See H E Holland, F E O'Flynn /'Ballot Box'/, and R S Ross, The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike (Wellington: The 'Worker' Printery, 1913; facsimile edition, Dunedin: Hocken Library, 1975), pp. 11-14.

Since Cabinet makes the authoritative decisions in the New Zealand political process, representation in the caucus of the governing party is not as accurate an indicator of the influence of the members of a given occupational category than representation in Cabinet. Ex-trade unionists, with ten out of thirteen ministers from 1935 to 1940, dominated the first two Labour Cabinets (see Table 14). In the second Labour Government, however, only five of sixteen ministers had trade union backgrounds, and in the third only six out of twenty. The influence of former trade unionists in Cabinet was rather less in the third than in the second Labour administration. Three of the first eight ministers in the Cabinet rankings from 1957 to 1960 had once been manual workers or trade union officials, but, after the Cabinet reshuffle that occurred after Rowling became Prime Minister in September 1974, not one of the seven most influential Cabinet ministers, the members of the Policy and Priorities Committee, had either a trade union background or was known to be of 'trade union persuasion' (see Table 25). Under Rowling, the influence of ex-trade unionists in the party leadership also reached its nadir (see chapter five).

What has caused the decline in the proportion of trade unionists in the PLP? One view is that as many trade unionists as in earlier years are being nominated for selection as Parliamentary candidates, but that, although they are not deliberately excluded, nominees with professional backgrounds tend more often to command the attributes which impress candidate 'selectors' and make them potentially good MPs.[68] The other view, of which there are two variants,

68. Isbey, Interview.

TABLE 14

OCCUPATIONAL ORIGINS OF MEMBERS
OF LABOUR CABINETS, 1935-75

Year		TU		WCW		PS		PROF.		B-F
1935	10	76.9	1	7.7	-	0.0	1	7.7	1	7.7
1938	10	76.9	1	7.7	-	0.0	1	7.7	1	7.7
1940	9	69.2	1	7.7	-	0.0	2	15.4	1	7.7
1943	10	58.8	2	11.8	-	0.0	3	17.6	2	11.8
1946 [1]	9	60.0	2	13.3	-	0.0	3	20.0	1	6.7
1957	5	31.25	3	18.75	2	12.5	4	25.0	2	12.5
1972	6	30.0	2	10.0	2	10.0	7	35.0	3	15.0
1974	6	31.6	2	10.5	2	10.5	7	36.8	2	10.5

SOURCE: Who's Who in New Zealand, all eds.

[1] Figures exclude James O'Brien, a trade unionist, who died in 1947, and include his replacement, Terry McCombs, a professional.

is that trade unionists have voluntarily opted out of Parliamentary politics. Once "very poorly paid and very poorly treated", trade union secretaries were attracted by a career in Parliament because "the pay was better and the job security greater"[69] - in spite of the possibility of defeat in triennial elections. To the extent that they have become more secure and more prosperous, however, their interest in a political career has diminished. One former MP and prominent trade unionist believes similarly that trade unionists are "just not coming forward"[70] as potential Parliamentary candidates. In the 1930's, the labour movement, industrial and political, attracted workers with ability, but with no alternative avenues of social mobility. The welfare state, however, has emancipated the offspring of the working class, so that the very people who, in the 1930's, would have become trade union activists and leaders now take higher education and subsequently obtain professional employment. The 'intellectual worker' is a disappearing phenomenon whose extinction has left the trade union movement dominated by "the mediocre"[71] - the unimaginative and the unambitious.

The evidence certainly tends to substantiate the view that fewer trade union personnel in post-war than in pre-war years have had political ambitions. Since the mid-1950's, the proportion of the Labour Party's

69. Ditchfield, Interview.

70. Douglas, Interview.

71. Douglas, Interview.

total membership supplied by affiliated trade unions has increased from 78 to 93 per cent (see Table 1). This means that trade union delegates have been able to build up their strength in the LECs and - despite the centralist bias of the party's candidate selection system - should have been able to ensure the adoption of more, rather than fewer, union nominees as Parliamentary candidates. In fact, of seventy-four Labour candidates elected to Parliament between 1918 and 1945, thirty-four (46 per cent) were trade unionists, compared with twenty-four (29 per cent) of eighty-two between 1946 and 1975. Significantly, those unions which have displayed a low propensity to produce Labour MPs are precisely those which have become increasingly dominant - in numerical terms, at least - in the trade union movement in the post-war period: the Engineers' Union (no MPs since 1945), the hotel workers', clerical workers' and shop-assistants' unions (one MP from each group), and the freezing workers', drivers' and carpenters' unions (none of which has produced any MPs). The unions which produced almost half of the trade union MPs in the pre-war period are those whose numbers and whose influence in the trade union movement have since declined: the miners', railwaymen's, tramwaymen's and workers' unions. Except for the ASRS, these unions have all produced fewer MPs in the post-war than in the pre-war period (see Table 15).

TABLE 15

AFFILIATIONS OF TRADE UNIONISTS IN THE PLP, 1919-75

Union	1919-27	1928-37	1938-45	1946-53	1954-62	1963-71	1972-75	Total
Bakers' employees	1 [a]	1						2
Bank officers						1		1
Boilermakers						1		1
Brewery workers	2 [b]				1 [c]			3
Clerical workers							1	1
Cooks and stewards					1			1
Engine-drivers	1				1 [d]			2
Engineers		1	1					2
Furniture-trade employees	1							1
Footwear operatives		1						1
Hotel workers							1	1
Labourers	2		1		1			4

TABLE 15 - Continued

Union	1919-27	1928-37	1938-45	1946-53	1954-62	1963-71	1972-75	Total
Miners	3	1		1				5
Plumbers and gas-fitters				1 [e]				1
Printers		1		1			1	3
ASRS (NUR)	1 [f]	2		1	1	1		6
Shop-assistants							1	1
Storemen and packers					1			1
Tailoresses	2							2
Timber workers			1		1 [g]			2
Tramway employees	1 [h]	1	2	1				5
Unemployed workers		1						1
Waterside workers		1				3		4
New Zealand Workers	1	3	1		2			7
Total	16	12	6	5	8	7	4	58

TABLE 15 - Continued

SOURCES: Who's Who in New Zealand, all eds. General Assembly Library, Biographical Files.

NOTE: Subjects have been classified according to the period in which they were elected to Parliament.

[a] Also active in tailoresses' union.

[b] One was also secretary of grocers' and match factory employees' unions.

[c] Also secretary of rubber workers', coach-workers', woollen mill employees' and journalists' unions.

[d] The first Prime Minister in the third Labour Government, Norman Kirk, who was also an engineer-boilerman, casual waterfront labourer and ferry worker. He first came into contact with the Labour Party as the Auckland Ferry Workers' Union delegate to the Waitemata LRC. See John Dunmore, Norman Kirk: A Portrait (Palmerston North: New Zealand Books, 1972), pp. 29-50 passim.

[e] The president of the FOL (1963-), Sir Thomas Skinner, who was a plumber by occupation and union membership and secretary of musicians', shipwrights' and other unions.

[f] Also member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.

[g] Also transport workers' union secretary.

[h] Also storemen and packers' union secretary.

CHAPTER II

TRADE UNION ECONOMISM AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF FULL EMPLOYMENT

New Zealand trade unions have historically displayed little interest in carrying out the great task assigned by the industrial working class by Marx - that of overthrowing capitalism and establishing in its wake the socialist order in which workers would control industry and society. Instead, they have preoccupied themselves increasingly exclusively with the pursuit of financial and related improvements within an implicitly accepted capitalist industrial structure. In this chapter we shall first examine, and attempt to account for, the predominance of this orientation among New Zealand trade unions. It shall then be argued that the unions' primary objectives are so narrow in their scope that they can be achieved, under certain conditions, without the unions having recourse to the Labour Party. These conditions were notably lacking in the 1930's, when the unions' commitment to political action via the Labour Party was strong, but have prevailed for more or less the entire post-war period, during which time, trade union involvement in the Labour Party has, of course, declined.

I. ECONOMISM AND THE DECLINE OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY IN THE NEW ZEALAND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Only two trade union organizations in New Zealand could reasonably be described as having so much as proclaimed the necessity or desirability of revolutionary, as opposed to evolutionary, social change. Both these organizations, the New Zealand or 'Red' Federation of Labour (1908-13) and the AOL (1919-37), were strongly influenced by the syndicalist ideology of the American 'Industrial Workers of the World' (IWW), whose ideals had been adopted and imported into New Zealand by the Federation's first secretary, Patrick Hickey. At its 1912 conference, the Federation adopted the preamble of the IWW. It read in part:

> The working-class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working-people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.
>
> Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.
>
> It is the historic mission of the working-class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism has been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.[1]

This preamble, and the constitution and rules to which it was attached, would have come into force in

1. NZFOL, New Constitution and Rules (Wellington: 'The Worker' Print, 1912); quoted in Holland, O'Flynn and Ross, The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike, p. 13.

January 1913, if the Federation had not been demoralized by the complete defeat of the Waihi Miners' Strike, which lasted from May to November in 1912. The industrial unionists of the Federation hastened to achieve unity with the craft union or 'moderate' wing of the industrial labour movement at the Unity Conferences of 1913. The product of the compromise of the 'militant' and 'moderate' unions was the United Federation of Labour (UFL), whose slightly less aggressive objective was "to organize systematically and scientifically upon an industrial union basis, in order to assist the overthrow of the capitalist system, and thus bring about a Co-operative Commonwealth, based upon industrial democracy".[2] But the UFL, too, was short-lived - it was crushed by the employers and the Reform Government in the great strike of November-December 1913.

The formation in 1919 of the AOL, which commanded the allegiance of many of the unions that had affiliated to the Federation, was a direct consequence of the shift of emphasis toward political action that had occurred in the New Zealand labour movement in the wake of the calamitous events of 1912 and 1913. Political action of the type practised by the newly-established Labour Party was anathema - at first - to the leaders of the AOL, who regarded themselves as the new bearers of the abandoned syndicalist objectives of the 'Red' Federation. Craft unionism, destructive as it was of working-class industrial solidarity, was the 'bete noire' of the AOL. It

2. Hickey, 'Red' Fed. Memoirs, p. 71.

envisaged the establishment of 'One Big Union', an alliance of national unions, divided into industrial departments, which would not only use strike action to win better wages and conditions for workers, but would also "pave the way for worker control of industry",[3] its ultimate objective. But as conditions in the 1920's became less and less supportive of successful industrial action, so did the AOL gradually lose sight of its revolutionary goal.

In action, as opposed to proclamation, the 'Red' Federation and the AOL were similarly unrevolutionary. Far from being oriented toward increasing workers' control over the productive process, the Federation based its claim that it was effective on the successes that it had achieved in negotiating wage increases for its member unions.[4] Like the Federation, the AOL opposed the existence of the Arbitration Court, the institution created in 1894 to rule upon claims for wage increases (or decreases) and settle other industrial disputes which employers and workers could not together resolve. Its approach to industrial relations problems turned out, however, to be pragmatic. As the economic boom caused by World War I collapsed and unemployment increased in the 1920's, the Alliance was induced to co-operate with the Court and even to shelter under its protective

3. R C J Stone, "The Unions and the Arbitration System, 1900-1937", in Studies of a Small Democracy, eds. Robert Chapman and Keith Sinclair (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1963), p. 209.

4. Holland, O'Flynn and Ross, The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike, pp. 26-28.

umbrella.[5] Having failed in several instances to give effective support to affiliated unions during strikes, the AOL by 1925 had been "weakened and discredited".[6]

The event which could have been expected to cause an upsurge of trade union interest in questions of workers' control was the election of the first Labour Government in 1935. But this was not the case. The only experiments in workers' control - by several branches of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners in the building industry - failed miserably.[7] With the encouragement of Lee, who, as under-secretary to the Minister of Finance, was in charge of housing, branches of the society formed co-operative companies in Wellington, Dunedin and Hamilton. The company in Wellington foundered because "every workman wanted to be the boss".[8] In Hamilton, the experiment failed when a building contractor offered the men running their own enterprise "10/- a day more in wages and £10 a house less"[9] to work for him. Rather more successful, the Dunedin venture lasted about a year, then it also folded up. Lee was motivated to write that:

> Merely by becoming a member of a trade union and by being automatically affiliated by a majority vote to the New Zealand Labour Party, the trade unionist does not become a socialist. We have socialist institutions dominated by capitalist culture, and a period of time must elapse before that mental transformation can be achieved that

5. Stone, "The Unions and the Arbitration System", p. 211.

6. Ibid.

7. Erik Olssen, "John A Lee, The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners and 'Worker Control' of the Building Industry", Political Science 27 (July-December 1975): 40-55 passim.

8. Ibid., p. 47.

9. Ibid.

> will enable the workers to control industry as well as to secure an increased proportion of its fruits. ...
>
> How to achieve a new outlook among our own people is the difficulty confronting the Labour movement.[10]

The nature of the industrial relations remits considered at Labour Party conferences at about this time reflects the unions' overwhelming preoccupation with questions of wages, hours, holidays, accident compensation, and union membership requirements. In 1941, for example, 46 remits that went before conference were addressed to these topics - and only four to workers' control or to worker participation in industrial decision-making.[11] At the 1945 conference, the president of the Labour Party and former secretary of the AOL, Roberts, expressed his disappointment that workers did not seem at all interested in controlling and owning industry. The time had come for the Labour Government to implement the party's socialist objective, he said, but:

> ... Only in a few cases has anything been done in that direction. Neither does there appear to be any serious effort on the part of the wage-workers to demand it ... The workers through the years have by the system under which we lived been made irresponsible, merely to do as they were told. Now Labour has come of age, and there is only one cure for irresponsibility and that is responsibility to do the job. It requires the joint co-operation of the Government, the political and the trade union side of our Movement to introduce and make a success of co-operative production and co-operation in the rendering of services.[12]

10. John A Lee, Socialism in New Zealand (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1938); quoted ibid., p. 51.

11. NZLP, Report of the Twenty-fifth Annual Conference (1941), passim.

12. NZLP, Report of the Twenty-ninth Annual Conference (1945), p. 4.

Since World War II, the socialist content in the ideology of New Zealand trade unionism has been further diluted, a trend of which there is evidence in the changing objectives of the FOL itself. The objectives that it chose in 1937 were "the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange" and the "complete organization of all workers by grouping them to secure the full value of their labour".[13] It discarded these objectives in 1951 and decided then that it should work for "a more equitable share of the national income, and ultimately, production for social use and not private profit".[14] In retrospect, the FOL's new objective seems to have been its formal acknowledgement that its primary function was to bargain for and secure on behalf of organized labour a greater share of the surplus produced by private enterprise - without raising the issue of whether enterprise should be private or public. There was subsequently a sharp decrease in the number of remits advocating nationalization and schemes for workers' control considered by the FOL's annual conference. At every conference in the 1940's, an average of three or four remits on these subjects had been considered; after Labour lost the 1949 election, and even while it was in office again from 1957 to 1960, "hardly any similar remits"[15] were put forward. In the

13. NZFOL, Constitution and Rules (Wellington: NZFOL, 1937), p. 1.

14. NZFOL, Constitution and Rules, revised ed., (Wellington: NZFOL, 1952), p. 1.

15. R S Milne, Political Parties in New Zealand (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 108.

1970's, issues of ultimate socialism and the like do not concern the trade union movement in New Zealand. Today, as one student of New Zealand trade unions has noted, "the high-flown ideals of the past, enshrined in the preambles and objectives of earlier organizations, are seldom mentioned ... 'Bread and butter' issues, here and now, have become the first priority"[16] - if ever they were not.

The decline in socialist ideology which has thus occurred in the New Zealand trade union movement is characteristically caused, argues Mann, by "the growth of capitalist hegemony".[17] In the ideology of hegemonic capitalism, "freedom and justice are best secured by 'breaking down' man's needs and activities into separate segments and providing each one with a separate market in which individuals can express their preferences and realize their needs".[18] Industrial and political behaviour in this type of social structure is characterized by "the separation of each sector, and implicit acceptance of the 'laws of the market' regulating each sector".[19] In advanced capitalist societies, "industrial action has generally split off from political action, and industrial action itself has split into two subordinate and separate spheres: the economic and the job /that is, shop floor,

16. Roth, "Trade Unions", in Labour and Industrial Relations in New Zealand, p. 12.

17. Michael Mann, Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 42.

18. Ibid., p. 19.

19. Ibid.

not industry/ control spheres".[20] Since employers will make concessions on economic, but not on control, issues, trade unions typically preoccupy themselves with the attainment of economic bargaining gains and, in the process, tend to "lose sight of control issues, whether these concern the immediate work situation or wider-ranging questions of industrial structure".[21] Indeed, the existing industrial structure tends to be legitimated by the very activity of compromise economic bargaining. Trade unions in hegemonic capitalist societies are thus preoccupied almost exclusively with economism, "the pursuit of financial improvements, ... within the existing structure of industry".[22]

The history of the New Zealand trade union movement since the passage of the IC & A Act by the Liberal Government in 1894 is largely a history of changing union attitudes toward a system whereby they have been required to submit irreconcilable disputes with employers to a third party, the Arbitration Court, whose rulings on the disputes

20. Ibid., p. 20. 'Political' or 'protest' stoppages in industry, defined as those in which no demand is made on an employer, represented 13.4 per cent of all stoppages in New Zealand in 1972, 5.7 per cent in 1973, and 15.5 per cent in 1974. See Department of Labour, Industrial Stoppages Report 1974 (Wellington: Department of Labour, 1975), p. 13. The National Government elected in 1975 proposes to amend existing industrial relations legislation to permit civil action to be taken against trade unions for damages arising out of their 'non-industrial' activities. The separation of industrial and political action would thus be reinforced by law.

21. Mann, Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, p. 21.

22. Ibid., p. 20.

they have been bound to accept.[23] Without exception, the radical trade union organizations in New Zealand labour history - the 'Red' Federation, the AOL and the TUC, which survived for barely a year - are the ones which asserted that organized labour was strong enough to win bigger wage increases in direct bargaining with employers than under the arbitration system. Above all else, the great industrial confrontations of this century have been revolts against that system. The radical trade union organizations sought to practise and popularize aggressive economism, as opposed to the passive economism which has traditionally been favoured by the craft unions and the smaller, weaker and less class-conscious unions, many of which were virtually created and maintained as autonomous units by the provisions of the 1894 Act.[24] However, the 'Red' Federation never commanded the allegiance of more than about 20 per cent of New Zealand's organized workers and the delegates at the inaugural conference of the TUC in August 1950 represented only 22,765 workers, 8.25 per cent of the total number of trade unionists then registered under the IC & A Act.[25] Not until the late 1960's did alienation from the arbitration system seem to engulf a majority of New Zealand trade unions.

23. See, for example, Stone, "The Unions and the Arbitration System", p. 201; Michael Bassett, Confrontation '51: The 1951 Waterfront Dispute (Wellington: Reed, 1972), pp. 8-12.

24. "In some respects, many unions become mere state agencies and cease to be unions in any real sense; they have no reason for their existence except to secure an award of the Court" (Howells, "Industrial Conflict in New Zealand", p. 170).

25. Bassett, Confrontation '51, p. 223.

The causes of industrial stoppages which have taken place in New Zealand this century are categorized in Table 16, which reveals that disputes over wages have inspired more stoppages than any other cause in five out of seven ten-year periods since 1906 and 34 per cent of all the stoppages recorded over the entire period from 1906 to 1974. The proportion of all stoppages incited by disputes specifically about wages has shown an especially marked increase in the last decade. In an analysis of industrial conflict in New Zealand between 1951 and 1971 and on the basis also of a break-down of the number of workers involved in stoppages and the number of working-days lost, one observer has concluded that: "By far the most important source of conflict ... has been in the broad area of wages".[26]

II. WHY ECONOMISM?

How, then, do we explain New Zealand trade unions' enduring and increasingly exclusive preoccupation with economism? The existing literature on international variations in working-class consciousness,[27] which is quite substantial, but essentially speculative, suggests

26. Howells, "Industrial Conflict in New Zealand", p. 172.

27. For a selection, see Perry Anderson, "Origins of the Present Crisis", in Towards Socialism, eds. Anderson and Robin Blackburn, American edition (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 11-52; Richard F Hamilton, Affluence and the French Worker in the Fourth Republic (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967); Everett M Kassalow, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations: An International Comparison (New York: Random House, 1969); Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Changing Class Structure and Contemporary European Politics", Daedalus 93 (Winter 1964); and Mann, Consciousness and Action among the Western Working Class.

CAUSES OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES
IN NEW ZEALAND, 1906-74

Causes		1906-15	1916-25	1926-35	1936-45	1946-55	1956-65	1966-74	Total
Wages		62	195	76	231	248	230	912	1954
	%	36.0	37.4	23.8	28.3	26.3	32.5	40.5	34.1
Hours		6	24	3	41	20	8	50	152
	%	3.5	4.6	0.9	5.0	2.1	1.1	2.2	2.6
Employment		26	94	66	159	149	222	463	1179
	%	15.1	18.1	20.7	19.5	15.8	31.4	20.6	20.6
Other working		15	142	123	273	140	149	473	1315
conditions	%	8.7	27.3	38.6	33.5	14.9	21.0	21.0	23.0
Sympathy		61	33	27	7	60	16	62	266
	%	35.5	6.3	8.5	0.9	6.4	2.3	2.8	4.6
Other causes		2	33	24	105	324	83	290	861
	%	1.2	6.3	7.5	12.8	34.4	11.7	12.9	15.0
Total		172	521	319	816	941	708	2250	5727
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

SOURCE: Department of Statistics, New Zealand Official Yearbook (Wellington: Government Printer), 1921-75.

several possible reasons for the 'economistic'[28] orientation of New Zealand trade unions.

(1) The (Non-)Ideological Heritage

Socialism has turned out to be "a philosophy which is /or is not/ learned",[29] not one which suddenly and spontaneously explodes within the working class as Marx seemed to think it would.[30] Not widely exposed to revolutionary working-class ideologies in its formative stages, the trade union movement in this country instead 'learned' an ideology which did not demand the overthrow of capitalism. In nineteenth century New Zealand, the norm was established that the State should intervene in any sphere of social life where its intervention was popularly demanded or seen to be necessary. (Hence the IC & A Act to help trade unionism when it was unable

28. 'Economistic' is preferred to 'economic' in this context because it connotes 'within the existing structure of industry'. A trade union's 'economic' objectives could feasibly include the overthrow of capitalism and the achievement of public ownership and control of industry.

29. Mann, Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, p. 71.

30. It is also, therefore, a philosophy which is, or is not, taught. New Zealand has never possessed an intellectual or 'political' class whose role would be to discuss and disseminate alternative ideologies. This may account for the fact that the New Zealand labour movement has traditionally been very 'non-ideological' - in the sense that ideology is something which is consciously articulated. Hence, also, the description of the dominant political ideology in New Zealand at the beginning of this century as 'socialism without doctrine'. See Keith Ovenden, "Prospect: On the Absence of Political Ideas", in Labour in Power: Promise and Performance, eds. Ray Goldstein and Rod Alley (Wellington: New Zealand University Press, 1975), pp. 192-94.

to help itself.[31]) Socialist theories were not widely accepted, it has been argued, "because demands for changes in conditions usually received the attention of the /Liberal/ Government",[32] which solved problems without either referring to or using a socialist plan. In any case, the socialist writings which did enter New Zealand before the turn of the century - British Fabian tracts, for example - were oriented much more toward social reform (within capitalism) than toward social revolution. The Trades and Labour Councils, which later combined with the 'Red' Federation to form the Labour Party as their political instrument and with the AOL in 1937 to form the FOL, were interested in "promoting the general welfare of the worker", rather than in building a socialist society.[33]

The mainstream of the New Zealand trade union movement has never departed from the tradition which was thus established in the final years of the nineteenth century and the first few of the twentieth. The collapse of the 'Liberal-Labour' alliance after the death of Seddon in 1906 was a consequence more of the 'conservatization' of the Liberal Party than of a widespread radicalization of the trade union movement. The United Labour Party, based upon the trades councils, was formed

31. See E J Keating, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations in New Zealand, revised ed. (Wellington: Industrial Relations Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, 1974), pp. 4-5.

32. Josephine F Milburn, "Socialism and Social Reform in Nineteenth Century New Zealand", Political Science 12 (March 1960): 70.

33. Ibid., p. 66.

because the Liberal Government had failed "to move forward" and no longer realized "the ideals of true Liberalism".[34] Significantly, when the Labour Party was finally swept into office in 1935, the new Prime Minister, Michael Savage, told the people: "We take up where Seddon left off".[35]

The 'Red' Federation and the AOL, of course, adopted the revolutionary syndicalist ideology of the IWW introduced into New Zealand by Hickey in 1906, but both attracted the support of only a minority of unions - the former the miners', watersiders' and labourers' unions and the latter mainly the unions in the transport industries - and both, moreover, failed. Partly because of New Zealand's geographical isolation and partly because the government by this time was banning the introduction of radical political literature, Communism was virtually unknown in New Zealand "until the newspaper headlines announced the October Revolution".[36] For the New Zealand working class, as for British working class, whose "maximum ardour and insurgency coincided with the minimum availability of socialism as a structured ideology",[37] revolutionary socialist theories arrived too late, and they became influential in only a few unions,

34. George Fowlds, leader, United Labour Party; quoted in Holland, O'Flynn and Ross, The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike, p. 80.

35. Quoted in W T G Airey, "The Rise of the Labour Party", in Ends and Means in New Zealand Politics, 2nd ed., edited by Robert Chapman (Auckland: University of Auckland, 1963), p. 37.

36. Roth, "The October Revolution and New Zealand Labour", Political Science 13 (September 1961): 46.

37. Anderson, "Origins of the Present Crisis", p. 20.

such as the miners' and seamen's, and in the Unemployed Workers' Movement during the Depression. But, even if they had arrived somewhat earlier, it is doubtful whether their impact would have been profound in a country which had not widely experienced either "the grosser evils of industrialism"[38] or of feudalism.

(2) Absence of a Feudal Tradition

The absence of a feudal tradition in New Zealand may, in fact, account for the shallowness of its socialist tradition. More than anything else, a feudal tradition and the persistence of feudal industrial and social relations are likely to produce revolutionary, as opposed to reformist, working-class movements - as they have done, for example, in France and Italy. Generally, industrial workers seem to be least revolutionary in those countries which either did not experience feudalism and its concomitant class polarization, such as the United States, or else succeeded in eliminating it at the beginning of or early in their capitalist phase, such as Britain. Revolutionary socialist ideologies are characteristically the product more of "the carry-over of a feudal tradition than of the emergence of capitalism".[39] Thus, societies that lack a feudal tradition tend also to lack a deeply-rooted socialist tradition: "The hidden origin of socialist thought everywhere in the West is to be found in the feudal ethos".[40]

38. Stone, "The Unions and the Arbitration System", p. 207.

39. Kassalow, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations, p. 7.

40. Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America; quoted ibid.

The working-class is most reformist in the most capitalist societies and most revolutionary in those in which capitalism and other forms of social organization co-exist.[41]

(3) Early Integration into Society

One of the reasons why revolutionary ideologies have retained their grip among industrial workers in societies in which feudal values have proved most tenacious is that these workers have typically been most deprived in respect of their economic and political rights. Conceivably, no trade union movement can preoccupy itself exclusively with economistic objectives until it has "come to terms with the social and political institutions of its own society".[42] In numerous countries in Western Europe, for example, workers did not achieve the right to organize into trade unions, the right to vote or freedom of movement until the very late nineteenth or the first half of the twentieth century. In France, in Italy and in other countries (but to a much lesser extent, significantly, in Britain), workers were 'locked out' of society and consequently set themselves the task of radically transforming it. Industrial workers in New Zealand suffered no comparable discrimination. Indeed, the State actively assisted in the development of trade unionism. Trade unions became legal under

41. Mann, Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, p. 42.

42. Adolf Sturmhal, "Unions and Economic Development", Economic Development and Cultural Change; quoted in Kassalow, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations, p. 30.

the Trade Unions Act of 1878, just as they were beginning to proliferate, and the IC & A Act of 1894 was, according to its preamble, "an Act to encourage the formation of industrial unions and associations". (Italics mine).[43] An overseas visitor was moved to observe that New Zealand unions were "litigious, rather than militant organizations, the creatures and instruments of State regulations".[44] Unions existed, Hickey later wrote, "not as fighting battallions [sic] in a Workers' Army, but merely as revenue-paying propositions that made possible office equipment, salaries and the expenses entailed in securing awards".[45]

On the political front, the franchise was extended to all adult men in New Zealand in 1890 and to all adult women in 1893. The very early enfranchisement of the industrial working class meant that when trade unions failed to realize their goals by industrial action, they could - and frequently did - resort to political means. Thus, after the collapse of the Maritime Strike, the first major industrial confrontation in New Zealand, in 1890, the trade union movement allied itself with the Liberal Party, which won the General Election the same year and remained in power until 1912. Similarly, the catastrophic industrial defeats of 1912 and 1913 gave rise to the Labour Party itself three years later, and the 1932

43. Quoted in Speeches and Documents on New Zealand History, eds. W David McIntyre and W J Gardner (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 226.

44. See Roth, "Trade Unions", p. 8.

45. Hickey, 'Red' Fed. Memoirs, p. 4.

amendment to the IC & A Act, which enabled employers to impose substantial wage-cuts and decimated union membership, to the consolidation of trade union support for the Labour Party in the 1935 election. In New Zealand, as the Wellington Trades and Labour Council told the 'Red' Federation when it appealed for financial assistance for the Waihi strikers, the working-man's vote was "of the same value as that of the managing director of the Waihi mines".[46] Thus, so long as they were able to capture the capitalist State and use it in their interests (as they perceived them), workers in New Zealand did not feel compelled to try to overthrow capitalism itself.

(4) Repression

The same capitalist State, however, has been hostile more often than benevolent in its attitude toward virile trade unionism. In successive years, 1912 and 1913, the might of the State was mobilized against unions which, as members of the 'Red' Federation and its successor, had resorted to direct action to defend or promote their interests. In 1913, the Reform Government recruited rural supporters as special constables and used them to reopen by force the ports occupied by striking watersiders. Of the events of the previous year, the propagandists of the 'Red' Federation had written that:

> The outburst of outrage and lawlessness at

46. Quoted in Holland, O'Flynn and Ross, The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike, p. 57.

> Waihi was undeniably planned by the mine-owners, with the Government for aiders and abettors, the police for organizers, ... and the law courts for instruments of oppression ...
>
> ... There are red stains of blood on the hands of the men of the Massey Government; ... there are black stains of guilt on their souls; ... there is a mantle of conspiracy and corruption and crime over their administration. If there were no conspiracy, and if the Government had nothing to hide, it would long ago have courted the fullest inquiry into every circumstance that led up to the riots, the attempted and successful raids on the halls, the murder of Evans /a striker, the first and hitherto the only person to die in an industrial dispute in New Zealand/, the driving out of Waihi citizens by thugs and police, and every linked-up event that followed. (Italics mine.) [47]

As a substitute for the naked physical force used to suppress the Waihi Strike, successive New Zealand governments have accumulated a potentially devastating arsenal of legal ammunition with which they were long able to either dissuade or to crush any challenge to the arbitration system, let alone to the State itself. Initially arbitration was voluntary for workers' unions. If they considered they would fare better in direct bargaining with employers than under the arbitration system, they were able to cancel their registration under the IC & A Act and legally use strike action by registering instead under the Trade Unions Act. From 1905 onwards, however, it became increasingly difficult for unions to adopt this practice. The IC & A Amendment Act of 1905 contained a provision which bound every worker - whether or not a member of the union which obtained it from the arbitration Court - to the terms of "any award covering the industry or trade in which he was employed"[48] and

47. Ibid., p. 191.

48. R M Martin, "Twenty Years of Compulsory Unionism", Political Science 8 (September 1956): 114.

which helped provoke and defeat the strike by the Waihi Miners' Union. (According to the policy of the 'Red' Federation, the union had cancelled its IC & A Act registration to gain the right to strike.) After the events of 1912 and 1913, the legislation relating to strikes was tightened by the passage of a Labour Disputes Investigation Bill which instituted financial penalties for strike action by unions registered under the 1878 Act and effectively closed the loophole that had been left for legal direct action.[49] The Chief Justice had already declared that it was illegal for a union registered under the IC & A Act to divert any of its funds to support striking workers.

The first Labour Government made its contribution to existing anti-strike legislation in 1939 by further amending the IC & A Act, this time to empower the Minister of Labour, against whose decision there could be no appeal, to cancel the registration of any union which failed to comply with the other provisions of the Act. In co-existence with compulsory unionism, which had been introduced in 1936, deregistration of a union made it possible for any fifteen workers to register a new union under the IC & A Act and make agreements on wages and conditions which would bind every worker in the industry or trade. Labour utilized this weapon on six occasions before it was defeated in 1949, but it was handled most effectively by the National Government in the 1951 waterfront dispute. Again, after

49. Stone, "The Unions and the Arbitration System", p. 206.

the striking unions had been crushed, the existing industrial relations legislation was supplemented the further to discourage unions from striking. By 1972, a member of a union registered under the IC & A Act who took part in a strike was liable to a penalty of up to $100, a trade union official $500, and a union $1,000. In industries where stoppages were deemed likely to cause serious public inconvenience, the penalties were $150 for a worker, $700 for a union official and $1,500 for a union. Moreover, if a strike took place after a secret ballot of members had not produced a majority in favour of such action, penalties for both workers and officials were doubled.[50]

These inhibitions on the right to strike explain why the economistic objectives of New Zealand trade unions have from time to time been frustrated better than why the objectives themselves have been economistic. But, in a case in 1919, the Arbitration Court interpreted an amendment made to the IC & A Act in 1898 as having restricted the lawful activities of trade unions solely to the settlement of industrial disputes by conciliation and arbitration. Up until 1964, trade unions were not even permitted to develop welfare funds for their members.[51] It is possible to argue, therefore, that the IC & A Act "blinkered"[52]

50. Howells, "Industrial Conflict in New Zealand", p. 163.

51. Noel S Woods, "Industrial Relations Legislation in the Private Sector", in Labour and Industrial Relations in New Zealand, p. 85.

52. Ditchfield, Interview.

unions and contributed materially to their almost exclusive preoccupation with the improvement of wages and conditions.

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF FULL EMPLOYMENT

Although industrial relations legislation in New Zealand has clearly tended to become more, rather than less, oppressive, the long-term tendency has been for industrial conflict to increase. Of all the industrial stoppages recorded in New Zealand between 1906 and 1974, almost 40 per cent took place in the last nine-year period (see Table 17). This process seems to have been interrupted only three times - by the defeat of the anti-arbitrationist unions in 1913 and 1951 and by the depression.

The fact that fewer stoppages occurred in the years 1931 to 1935 inclusive than in any other five-year period between 1910 and 1974, together with the generally much higher incidence of conflict in the years since 1945, confirms that "the aggregate level of strike activity is behaviourally related to the degree of tightness of the labour market".[53] Before World War II, unemployment in New Zealand was persistently high - probably never lower than about 2.5 per cent and as high as 22.5 per cent during the depression (see Tables 18 and 21). Since World War II, on the other hand, there has been sustained full employment. In every year since 1947, the number of

53. Orley Ashenfelter and George E Johnson, "Bargaining Theory, Trade Unions, and Industrial Strike Activity", American Economic Review; quoted in Howells, "Industrial Conflict in New Zealand", p. 172. This is not to say, of course, that other factors such as an increase in the average size of firms and faster rates of price inflation have not also contributed to increased industrial unrest.

TABLE 17

INCIDENCE OF INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT

IN NEW ZEALAND, 1906-74

Year	No. of Stop-pages	No. of Workers Involved	As % All W & S Earners	No. of Working Days Lost	Per 1000 W & S Earners
1906	1	88			
1907	6	558			
1908	2	63			
1909	1	N.A.			
1910	15	255*			
1911	22	1,375*			
1912	24	5,746*			
1913	73	13,400*			
1914	20	4,089*			
1915	8	295*			
1916	15	899*			
1917	45	2,734*			
1918	40	4,056*			
1919	45	4,030*			
1920	75	9,612*			
1921	77	10,433		119,208	
1922	58	6,414		93,456	
1923	49	7,162		201,812	
1924	34	14,815		89,105	
1925	83	9,905		74,552	
1926	59	6,264		47,811	
1927	38	4,476		12,485	
1928	39	9,258		21,997	
1929	47	7,151		25,889	

TABLE 17 - Continued

Year	No. of Stop-pages	No. of Workers Involved	As % All W & S Earners	No. of Working Days Lost	Per 1000 W & S Earners
1930	38	5,467		31,669	
1931	24	6,356		48,486	
1932	23	9,355		108,605	
1933	15	3,558		65,099	
1934	24	3,773		10,393	
1935	12	2,323		18,563	
1936	43	7,354		16,980	
1937	52	11,411		29,916	
1938	72	11,388		35,456	
1939	66	15,682		53,801	
1940	57	10,475		28,097	
1941	89	15,261		26,237	
1942	65	14,345		51,189	
1943	69	10,915		14,687	
1944	149	29,766		52,602	
1945	154	39,418		66 629	
1946	96	15,696		30,393	
1947	134	26,970	4.94	102,725	188.31
1948	101	28,494	5.12	93,464	168.01
1949	123	61,536	10.83	218,172	384.04
1950	129	91,492	15.91	271,475	472.21
1951	109	36,878	6.33	1,157,390	1,985.23
1952	50	16,297	2.76	28,123	47.55
1953	73	22,175	3.64	19,291	31.69
1954	61	16,153	2.59	20,474	32.83
1955	65	20,224	3.16	52,043	81.41
1956	50	13,579	2.08	23,870	36.58

TABLE 17 - Continued

Year	No. of Stop-pages	No. of Workers Involved	As % All W & S Earners	No. of Working Days Lost	Per 1000 W & S Earners
1957	51	15,545	2.33	28,186	42.18
1958	49	13,709	1.99	23,870	27.30
1959	73	18,762	2.70	29,651	42.74
1960	60	14,305	2.00	35,683	49.98
1961	71	16,626	2.21	38,185	50.73
1962	96	39,921	5.23	93,157	121.95
1963	60	14,911	1.89	54,490	69.15
1964	93	34,779	4.27	66,834	82.05
1965	105	15,267	1.80	21,814	25.76
1966	145	33,132	3.79	99,095	113.25
1967	89	28,490	3.27	139,490	160.00
1968	153	37,458	4.28	130,267	148.71
1969	169	44,041	4.90	138,675	154.13
1970	323	110,096	11.85	277,348	298.60
1971	313	86,009	9.19	162,563	173.77
1972	266	60,429	7.18	134,505	148.31
1973	394	115,865	11.73	271,706	275.17
1974	380	70,904	6.98	183,688	180.83

SOURCE: Department of Statistics, New Zealand Official Yearbook, 1921-75.

*Statistics for all stoppages not available.

TABLE 18

UNEMPLOYMENT IN NEW ZEALAND BY QUINQUENNIAL CENSUS, 1901-71

Census Year	All Wage Earners	Unemployed Males	% Unemployed
1901	224,346	8,467	3.77
1906	269,039	8,189	3.04
1911	304,272	7,152	2.35
1916	302,161	5,920	1.96
1921	370,692	11,061	2.98
1926	414,673	10,694	2.58
1936	496,563	35,774	7.20
1945	473,684	5,823	1.23
1951	577,694	7,902	1.37
1956	653,358	5,558	0.85
1961	750,882	4,674	0.62
1966	870,813	5,125	0.59
1971	958,563	8,757	0.91

SOURCE: Department of Statistics, New Zealand Official Yearbook, 79th ed., 1974, p.918.

registered unemployed has averaged out at less than 1 per cent of the estimated labour force (see Table 19).

How, exactly, do levels of employment affect industrial relations? Galbraith explains that:

> When unemployment is small, the bargaining position of unions is, in general, strong. Members can face a strike with the assurance that they cannot be replaced. As a more practical matter they know that they will be inflicting the maximum loss of business on the employer and that after the strike is over they will promptly be recalled to work.
>
> Employers, on their side, will deem it wise under such circumstances to grant increases in wages ... By the time unemployment is reduced to the hard-core categories, there will usually be a shortage of some classes of production workers. Higher wages will seem to be a way of holding, or recruiting manpower.[54]

As a rule, then, the lower the level of unemployment, the greater is the bargaining power of trade unions and the greater is likely to be their attraction to direct industrial action as a means of attaining their economistic objectives. Of those stoppages which took place between 1906 and 1935 and ended in a decisive victory for either side, workers won 42 per cent. With the labour market gradually tightening, however, they won considerably more disputes than employers in the last decade before the end of World War II and 64 per cent of those which produced decisive results - under conditions of more or less permanent full employment - between 1946 and 1973. The post-war labour market, in marked contrast to the pre-war market, has thus favoured the seller (see Table 20). "Strikes have proved a fruitful

54. John Kenneth Galbraith, The New Industrial State, 2nd ed. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1974), pp. 250-51.

TABLE 19

REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT

IN NEW ZEALAND, 1947-74

Year	Average Unemployed	Est. labour force (April)	% Unemployed
1947*	83	542,600	0.02
1948*	61	547,000	0.01
1949*	88	553,300	0.02
1950*	34	561,600	0.01
1951*	28	566,300	0.005
1952*	33	575,600	0.01
1953*	67	588,100	0.01
1954*	48	601,800	0.01
1955*	44	609,200	0.01
1956*	240	619,500	0.04
1957	394	829,900	0.05
1958	785	847,900	0.09
1959	1,210	861,800	0.14
1960	633	875,600	0.07
1961	376	895,300	0.04
1962	1,041	911,400	0.11
1963	849	929,700	0.09
1964	650	956,500	0.07
1965	512	988,700	0.05
1966	460	1,021,800	0.05
1967	3,852	1,052,500	0.37
1968	6,877	1,043,400	0.66

TABLE 19 - Continued

Year	Average Unemployed	Est. labour force (April)	% Unemployed
1969	2,926	1,061,200	0.28
1970	1,600	1,090,700	0.15
1971	3,115	1,112,000	0.29
1972	5,684	1,122,900	0.52
1973	2,321	1,150,200	0.21
1974	955	1,188,700	0.08

SOURCE: Department of Labour, Labour and Employment Gazette (Wellington: Department of Labour) 1-25 (1951-75).

*Statistics for males only.

TABLE 20

RESULTS OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

IN NEW ZEALAND, 1906-73

Result		1906-15	1916-25	1926-35	1936-45	1946-55	1956-65	1966-73	Total
Workers'		14	119	77	226	188	122	388	1134
	%	8.1	22.8	24.1	27.7	20.0	17.2	20.7	21.2
Employers'		83	119	88	169	81	89	217	846
	%	48.3	22.8	27.6	20.7	8.6	12.6	11.6	15.8
Compromise		23	79	70	101	175	183	565	1196
	%	13.4	15.2	21.9	12.4	18.6	25.8	30.2	22.4
Indeterminate		52	204	84	320	497	314	700	2171
	%	30.2	39.2	26.3	39.2	52.8	44.3	37.4	40.6
Total		172	521	319	816	941	708	1870	5347
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

SOURCE: Department of Statistics, New Zealand Official Yearbook, 1921-75.

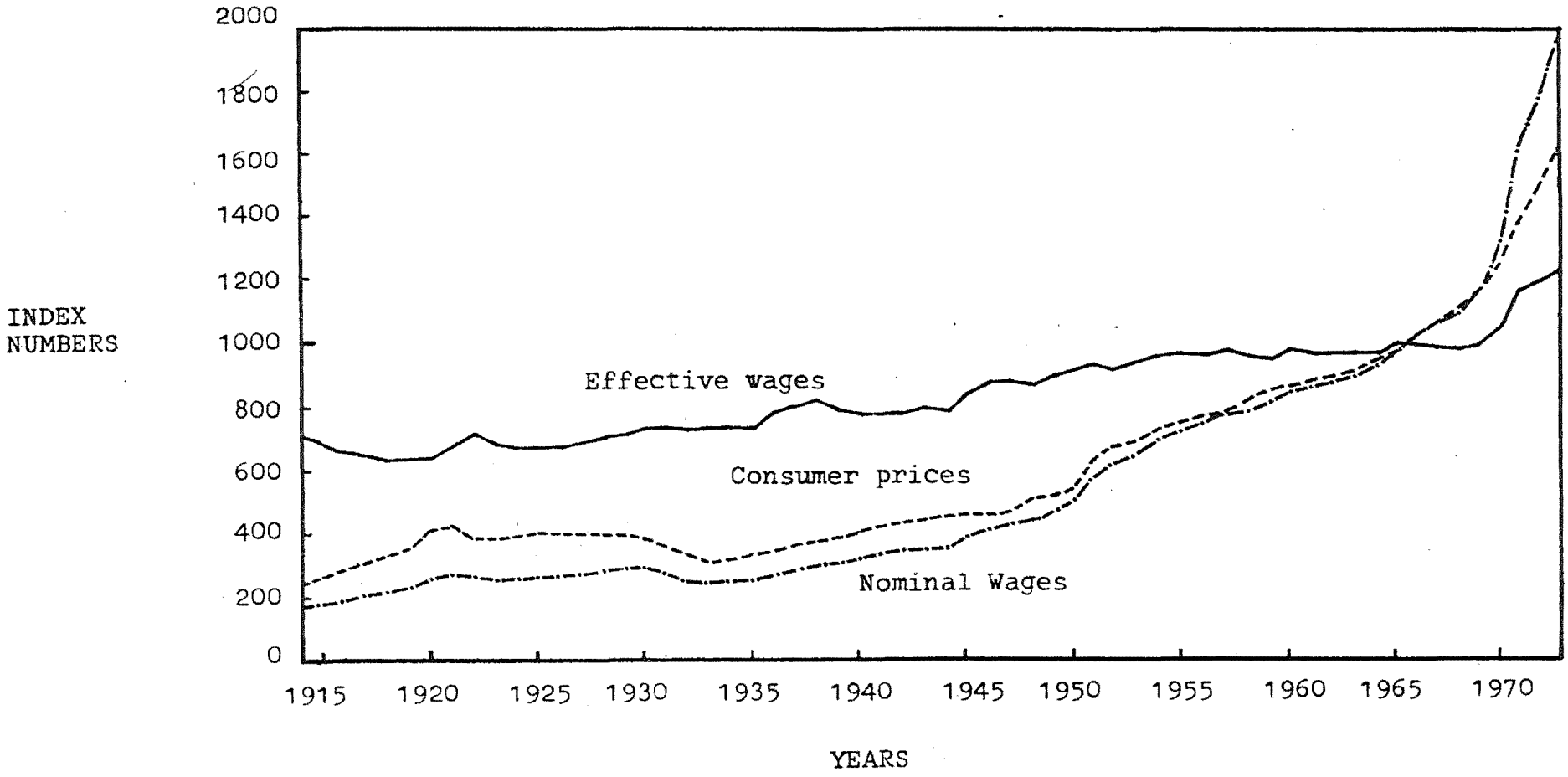
tactic and appear to give quick and satisfying results.... Unions have had little motive ... to find other ways of achieving their purposes".[55]

Trade unions should consequently have gained rather more substantial wage increases for their members in the post-war than in the inter-war period. As the graph illustrates, this has indeed been the case. After World War I, real wages did not reach the level that had been attained in 1914 until 1928, except temporarily in 1922, and no great progress was made until 1936. The average annual increase in real wages from 1914 to 1940 was 2.8 points on the effective weekly wage rates index, compared with 13.0 points for the period from 1946 to 1973. Moreover, the real wage increases that were obtained between the end of World War I and about 1935 were spread over an ever smaller section of the available labour force - those that were employed. Wage increases since 1945 have been distributed throughout a labour force that has been virtually fully employed.

What have been the political consequences of the greatly increased 'industrial power' of trade unions in the post-war period? In the inter-war period, when unemployment was high, the bargaining position of trade unions weak and industrial action for economistic ends was not feasible, the trade unions' commitment to political action and the Labour Party was very strong. In

55. Howells, "Industrial Conflict in New Zealand", p. 172.

REAL WAGE RATES IN NEW ZEALAND, 1914-73



the post-war years, during which unemployment has been very low, the bargaining position of the unions very strong and economistic ends have been readily attainable by industrial action, trade union involvement in the party has declined considerably, as we saw in the first chapter. It thus appears that to the extent that full employment enables them to practise economism successfully and independently, trade unions attach less importance to political action and to involvement in the Labour Party.[56]

Before a case study of the political consequences of mass unemployment is presented in the next section of this chapter, let us briefly consider two weaknesses possibly apparent in the argument just stated. Firstly, trade union economism was not as successful for much of the post-war period as is perhaps indicated by the overall increase in the index of effective wage rates. The average annual increase in real wages over the entire period has been greatly inflated by the substantial gains made in the years from 1969 to 1973. If the period is shortened to the years from 1946 to 1969, the average

56. Lewis Minkin, in "The British Labour Party and the Trade Unions: Crisis and Compact", Industrial and Labor Relations Review 28 (October 1974): 12-13, suggests that full employment and the effectiveness of their industrial activities has made trade unions in Britain feel more secure and strong, less reliant upon the party, and less predisposed toward adopting a positive role within it. Kassalow, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations, p. 30, notes that, according to some theories, "in times of economic growth and expansion there is a satisfactory 'bargaining margin' in the economy, and unions can be expected to place a relatively heavy emphasis upon collective bargaining", vis-à-vis political action.

annual increase falls by more than 50 per cent to 6.3 points. The graph also reveals that real wage-rates increased overall by only two points in eleven years from 1957 to 1968. Thus, the increase in the success of trade union economism has been overall rather than uniform.

Likewise, however, the decline in trade union involvement in the Labour Party has not been exactly uniform. Perhaps understandably, when trade unions were unable to improve real wages while the second Labour Government was in office from 1957 to 1960, they seem to have been alienated from, rather than attracted to, the party and their involvement in it declined (see Table 2). But for much of the decade from 1960 to 1970, while real wages remained fairly static and the National Party was in power, their involvement in the party - at least in terms of membership - increased. From 1970 onwards, as they gained substantial wage increases, the extent of their involvement, measured by the same indicator, declined again. By 1975, trade unions - by almost all indicators - were less involved and less active in the Labour Party than they had been when the second Labour Government fell in 1960.

A second, and related, point is that trade unions have not become so preoccupied with industrial action for economistic ends that they have completely eschewed political action. Indeed, the degree of State intervention in wage determination in New Zealand is so high that this would be quite impossible. However, their

principal political objective since the 1961 FOL Conference has been to achieve the right to bargain collectively with employers without third-party interference. Under the arbitration system, trade unions were severely constrained in their ability to translate their considerable bargaining power under full employment into wage increases for their members. This was proved when, after the Arbitration Court's refusal to grant a general wage-order in 1968, unions took the right to bargain directly with employers unilaterally and succeeded in increasing real wage-rates substantially between 1969 and 1973. They had to await the return of the Labour Party to office to have this right recognized in legislation, but not to achieve it in practice. Paradoxically, in the same year that it was recognized in legislation, it was, in practice, taken away. The FOL subsequently co-operated with the Government in its implementation of a policy of wage restraint on the explicit condition that as soon as it was practicable, there would be a return to free collective bargaining.[57]

IV. THE CONSEQUENCES OF MASS UNEMPLOYMENT: THE DEPRESSION (A CASE STUDY).

> Our movement is essentially a dual one - industrial and political dual, yet so intertwined that it is next to impossible to draw a line marking which is industrial and which political.[58]

57. See, for example, "Addresses by NZ Federation of Labour Officials", in NZLP, Report of the Fifty-eighth Annual Conference (1974), p. 53.

58. Walter Nash, secretary, NZLP, in Report of the Fourteenth Annual Conference (1930), p. 12.

The industrial defeats of 1912 and 1913 and the formation of a Reform-Liberal coalition and the introduction of conscription during World War I convinced leaders of moderate and militant trade unions alike of the necessity of a single, independent political party based upon the trade union movement. But the prospects for successful industrial action were good in the period of labour shortage which followed World War I. The leaders of the newly-formed AOL were consequently scathing in their condemnation of the Labour Party. "If we have elected our 'rats' to Parliament it is a good means of getting them out of the way", proclaimed the AOL's secretary, Roberts, in 1919, only six years before he was to become a member of the Labour Party's national executive. "Parliamentary action has been the anchor which has dragged the industrial movement in the mud for years".[59] Political action had become "too damn respectable" in the labour movement, the AOL president, Arthur Cook, told the Workers' Union conference in 1920. "You will gain more in one day by job action than can be obtained in a hundred years by political action".[60]

However, increasing unemployment gradually undermined the bargaining position of the unions in the 1920's. The AOL moderated its opposition to the arbitration system and tried to unite the trade union movement behind a policy of acceptance of the Arbitration Court,

59. Quoted in Stone, "The Unions and the Arbitration System", p. 209.

60. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 47.

at the same time as protesting at the inadequacy of its awards. By 1926, even this position had become untenable. Almost the entire trade union movement began to fight gamely to defend compulsory arbitration and prevent employers from enforcing wage-cuts.[61]

As the unions came to depend more and more on the court, rather than on their own strength, to maintain real wage-levels, they also became increasingly aware of the fact that the arbitration system was not inviolable, that the powers of the court could be amended at any time at the leisure of the governing party. Not surprisingly, the unions which had once scorned political action began to reconsider the wisdom of their former stance. In 1931, the United Government enacted legislation which empowered the court to amend any award before it was due to expire if an amendment was justified by economic circumstances. Civil service salaries had already been reduced by 10 per cent; now all awards in the private sector were similarly reduced. Worse was to come for the unions. Farmers' and employers' organizations had been campaigning since 1927 for the introduction of voluntary arbitration, whereby wage disputes would be referred to the court only upon the agreement of both employers and employees and, if employers did not agree, awards would lapse. The Coalition Government acquiesced in their demands with the IC & A Amendment Act of 1932.

Employers were freed to reduce wages and unilaterally

61. See, for example, ibid., p. 132; Stone, "The Unions and the Arbitration System", pp. 214-15.

alter conditions of work and employment at the very time that the unions were least able to resist. In 1931, the leader of the Labour Party, Harry Holland, had warned the unions that: "With a falling market and nearly 40,000 unemployed workers, the economic dice are heavily loaded against the industrial movement.... The effective battle of the wage-reductions must be fought out on the political field".[62] In 1932, after the amendment to the IC & A Act and with unemployment still rising (see Table 21), the accuracy of Holland's observation was indisputable. As Table 17 illustrates, trade unions, in terms of industrial action, were more quiescent in the years from 1931 to 1935 than in any other five-year period between 1906 and 1974. Employers easily defeated strikes by New Zealand's strongest unions - the United Mine Workers, whose membership fell by over 50 per cent in less than five years after 1929, the NZWWF and the Freezing Workers' Federation. Having refused to accept an award which proposed wage reductions ranging from 16 per cent to 66 per cent, the freezing workers decided to strike in July 1932. Taking advantage of the extremely high level of unemployment, the freezing companies reacted by engaging non-union labour on the terms rejected by federation members and organizing them into enterprise unions. The original unions were, in the end, annihilated.[63]

62. NZLP, Supplementary Report of the PLP (Wellington: NZLP, 1931), p. 4.

63. Stone, "A History of Trade Unionism in New Zealand, 1913-37" (MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1948), p. 147.

TABLE 21

REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT IN NEW ZEALAND, 1930-38

Year	No. totals on which average calculated	Average Unemployed [a]
1930	26	5,025
1931	12	38,941
1932	12	51,151
1933	12	53,714
1934	13	47,198
1935	13	38,572
1936	9	37,406
1937	2[b]	23,405
1938	2[b]	12,135

SOURCE: Department of Statistics, New Zealand Official Yearbook, 1932, 1934-37, 1942.

NOTE: The total number of adult males registered unemployed or on relief work reached a peak of 79,435 (22.5 per cent of the estimated available work force) on September 30, 1933.

a Totals are for males only, and exclude those on relief work.
b The highest and lowest monthly totals recorded in each year.

The employers boasted that, in the circumstances which prevailed, they could not be 'coerced' into "anything against their will".[64] By 1933, the unemployed in New Zealand outnumbered trade union members. Industrial action was, at best, futile, and, at worst, completely counter-productive for trade unions. Thus, "more than any other single event",[65] the passage of the 1932 amendment to the

64. Ibid., pp. 149-50

65. Ibid., pp. 151-52.

IC & A Act was instrumental in turning the attention of the unions away from industrial to political action and strengthening the link between the unions and the Labour Party.[66]

But the impetus for closer co-operation between the party and the unions did not come exclusively from the unions. The leadership of the Labour Party had been campaigning vigorously in the 1920's and 1930's, trying to persuade all trade unions to affiliate to the party. Holland had long sought to bring about complete working-class industrial and political unity - he had blamed the defeat of the Waihi Strike, for example, on 'class-unconsciousness', on sectionalism induced by craft, as opposed to industrial, unionism.[67] In his view, political 'non-unionism' - the failure of all trade unionists to vote for the Labour Party and of all trade unions to affiliate to it - explained why the party could not achieve electoral success.[68] The party also needed the revenue that could be obtained from union affiliation fees. In the words of John A. Lee, it was "perpetually broke" and won the 1935 election "with mere pence".[69] Not until 1938 was it able to afford the cost of standing candidates in all seats at a general election.

66. Cf. An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, Vol. 2, s.v. "Labour Party", by Brown: "The toll of unemployment ... rendered the trade unions virtually helpless and created within the labour movement a degree of unity and determination rarely [if ever] equalled".

67. See Holland, O'Flynn and Ross, The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike, p. 191.

68. For more extensive coverage of Holland's views on political 'non-unionism', see O'Farrell, Harry Holland, pp. 196-200.

69. John A Lee, Interview, Auckland, December 4, 1975.

Political 'non-unionism' was a recurrent theme in Holland's addresses to the party's annual conference. Non-affiliated unions were urged to "cast aside the vestiges of political non-unionism and get into line with the rest of the wealth producers, in order that a united front may be presented to the combined forces of reaction".[70] From 1928 to 1931, he waged a personal campaign among the 'non-political' unions to try to secure their affiliation. During this period, the party also sent deputations to the annual conference of the New Zealand Workers' Union and to a meeting of the United Mine Workers' Council to "explain the party's policy in the present political situation" and to "discuss methods of co-operating in the best interests of the movement".[71] The Workers' Union had actually voted to affiliate to the party in 1925, but had still not acted upon its decision in 1930. The delay in its affiliation led to an acrimonious debate at the party's 1930 conference between members of the PLP and the secretary of the union, Cook, who, along with Roberts, was anxious to assert the supremacy of the industrial wing over the political wing of the labour movement - in spite of the times. The main point at issue was the Labour Party's continued support of the United Government, which Cook

70. NZLP, Report of the PLP (1924), p. 4.

71. NZLP, Report of the Fourteenth Annual Conference (1930), p. 9. For an interesting theoretical discussion on bargaining between trade unions and working-class parties for operational resources for the parties, see Wellhofer and Hennessey, "Some Analytic Approaches to Oligarchy", pp. 286-91.

opposed because conditions on the public works schemes for the unemployed had deteriorated since the United (former Liberal) Party had defeated the Reform Party in the 1928 General Election. But Cook at least indicated that his formerly hostile attitude toward political action had mellowed. He told the delegates that: "The sooner we get both the political and industrial wings of the labour movement working together, the sooner we will get the best results for the working class".[72] Soon after the conference, a joint meeting of the executives of the Labour Party and the AOL was held. The two organizations attained "a general amity"[73] and co-operated fairly closely in this and following years - particularly on the question of unemployment.

The chief reason why the Workers' Union had postponed its affiliation to the party, according to Cook, was poverty. For a number of years, he said, the union had had "a tremendous struggle to keep its head above water, and to look after the interests of the men and women it represented".[74] When it could afford it, however, the union would not be "behind in doing its duty"[75] - which was to affiliate to the party. Many other unions were similarly poverty-stricken. Up until 1932, the

72. NZLP, "Address to Conference by Mr A Cook" (1930), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

73. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 142.

74. NZLP, "Address to Conference by Mr A Cook", p. 1.

75. Ibid.

growing attraction of political, compared with industrial, action had been reflected in a fairly constant increase in the proportion of all trade union members affiliated to the Labour Party (see Table 2). However, some unions did not long survive the passage of the amendment to the IC & A Act in 1932 - hence the decline in the number of registered trade unionists from almost 104,000 in 1929 to less than 72,000 in 1934 and the decline in the number of unions affiliated to the party.[76] Affiliated membership of the party began to decline in real terms as well, for the financial position of those unions that did survive was so precarious that many could not afford to pay affiliation fees to the Labour Party.[77] National executive reports in the 1930's contained detailed lists of unions in arrears with their affiliation fees. Some indication of the financial difficulties that the labour movement as a whole faced during the depression was given by the party's general secretary, James Thorn, when, in a circular to affiliated organizations which were in arrears with their fees, he explained that:

> "... At the present moment the arrears of affiliation fees amount to over £1,400. It must be obvious to you that the party can only carry on under the greatest difficulty whilst this state of things continues. Indeed it is

76. The party's national executive reported to the 1935 conference that, because of the depression and the practical abandonment of the arbitration system, "a number of the smaller unions have gone out of existence, with the result that the number of unions affiliated to the party has decreased from 189 to 151". NZLP, Report of the National Executive (1935), p. 1.

77. Lee, Interview.

hampered in every direction.

> "I know that times are bad and that the industrial unions in particular have been badly hit financially, but nevertheless I appeal to your organization to pay the dues owing ... if at all possible, or at the very least to pay such an amount as may be convenient. (Italics mine.)78

In any event, the failure (or inability) of AOL and other unions to affiliate to the party did not preclude the development of other forms of party-union co-operation. As early as 1922, "economic pressures" - that is, higher unemployment - had heightened trade union interest in the Labour Party and union and party representatives had conferred in order to unite the labour movement in its opposition to a proposed amendment to the IC & A Act.[79] By 1924, the party and the AOL had achieved "a practical working unity".[80] In that year, they established a joint research bureau; in 1925, the NZWWF, one of the biggest and most influential industrial unions in the AOL, affiliated to the party and its secretary, Roberts, was elected to the party's national executive; and, in 1926, the NLLC was set up. The party also began to send industrial relations remits submitted to its conference to the two national trade union organizations for their consideration. As unemployment continued to increase and the bargaining strength of the unions was further eroded, especially after the 1932 IC & A Act amendment, the relationship between the party and the unions became

78. NZLP, "Circular to Affiliated Organizations", dated January 20, 1933. (Mimeographed.)

79. O'Farrell, Harry Holland, pp. 116-18.

80. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 52.

increasingly intimate. One indicator of the 'convergence' of the unions and the party was the fact that, whereas only a few trade union officials publicly supported the Labour Party in 1922[81] and some unions even passed resolutions supporting Massey and his conservative Reform administration in 1925,[82] union support for the party in 1935 was "almost unanimous".[83]

The extent of the goodwill that the Labour Party had built up for itself within the trade union movement while it had been in opposition was illustrated by the great upsurge which took place in the party's affiliated membership after 1935 (see Table 2). The restoration of the depression wage-cuts, the enactment of compulsory unionism and the passage in 1936 of a Political Disabilities Removal Act, which removed any doubts as to the legality of the use of union funds for political purposes, all made unions more eager, more prosperous and more easily able to affiliate to the party. In its report to the 1939 conference, the party's national executive remarked that there were "very few unions now that have not linked up with the party".[84] This was a gross overstatement and rather

81. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 52.

82. Sutch, W B, The Quest for Security in New Zealand: 1840 to 1966 (Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 132.

83. Stone, "A History of Trade Unionism", p. 152.

84. NZLP, Report of the Twenty-third Annual Conference (1939), p. 6.

more than one-third still had not, but the trade unions' commitment to political action was more complete in the last few inter-war years than at any other time in the history of the Labour Party (see Tables 2 and 3). With the 'Red Fed.' veterans, Fraser, Webb, Semple, Parry, Armstrong and Fagan in Cabinet and Roberts as president of the party from 1937, and with almost the entire membership of the FOL also affiliated to the party, the industrial and political arms of the labour movement did appear so intertwined that it was almost impossible to distinguish one from the other - at least in terms of personnel. The principal agent of their inter-twinement, as we have seen, was mass unemployment.

CHAPTER III

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT: THE GROWTH OF THE NON-POLITICAL UNIONS

Full employment has enabled trade unions to revive industrial action as an effective strategy for the pursuit of economistic objectives in the post-war period. Whereas, during the depression, mass unemployment reduced the unions to impotency in their relations with employers and caused their involvement in the Labour Party to increase, in post-war years unions have been able to get for themselves what they want above all else - higher wages for their members. Consequently, the level of their involvement in the party has declined. But the trade union movement itself, as well as the bargaining position of unions, has been transformed in the post-war period. At least part of the increase in political 'non-unionism' in the last thirty years must be attributed to the rise within the movement of normally 'non-political' unions.

In at least one major study (carried out in Britain), far more white-collar than manual workers expressed the view that trade unions and the (British) Labour Party should be 'kept separate'.[1] Certainly, in all the

1. Goldthorpe et al., The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behaviour, p. 26. 74 per cent of the authors' white-collar sample believed that trade unions and the British Labour Party should be kept separate, compared with 55 per cent of the manual workers.

advanced industrialized democracies, the incidence of affiliation to labour or social-democratic parties is lower among white-collar than among manual workers' unions. White-collar unions in New Zealand have been even more reluctant to affiliate to their Labour Party than their counterparts in other countries have been to theirs. In Britain, as an example, nine purely white-collar unions and eighteen partially white-collar unions, accounting for 34 per cent of total white-collar union membership, were affiliated to the Labour Party in 1970 and in Australia at least 22 separate white-collar unions were affiliated to one, "or more in the case of inter-state unions",[2] of the state branches of the Australian Labor Party in 1965. In New Zealand, on the other hand, the unions currently affiliated to the Labour Party include only three which could be described as white-collar. They make up 19.9 per cent of total white-collar union membership and 16.3 per cent of the party's current affiliated membership.

The failure of the Labour Party to attract more white-collar unions into its ranks means that its affiliates include very few of the unions that have been growing most rapidly in the post-war period. The proportion of white-collar workers in the unionized work force increased from about 13 per cent in 1935 to about 22 per cent in 1946 and to 34.5 per cent in 1975. Although

2. George Sayers Bain, David Coates, and Valerie Ellis, Social Stratification and Trade Unionism: A Critique (London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 66.

technological change has undoubtedly been important in precipitating the decline of the few manual workers' unions which once dominated the trade union movement, the enactment of compulsory unionism in 1936 seems to have made the greatest contribution to the increase in the size of white-collar vis-à-vis manual workers' unions - between 1935 and 1945, for example, the number of unionized clerical workers increased from 111 to 22,560 (see Table 23, group B). In contrast to what is happening in more advanced industrialized societies, blue-collar industrial employment seems actually to have increased relative to white-collar employment in New Zealand in the last forty years. Between 1936 and 1971, the proportion of the New Zealand labour force employed in the service sector increased by 4.6 per cent, compared with a 13.5 per cent increase in employment in secondary industry (see Table 22).

TABLE 22

EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE IN NEW ZEALAND, 1936 AND 1971

Group	Percentage of labour force	
	1936	1971
Primary Production	27.1	12.0
Secondary Industry	24.2	34.7
Service	48.7	53.3

SOURCE: Department of Statistics, New Zealand Official Yearbook, 80th ed., 1975, p. 848.

Of all the white-collar unions, then, only three - the Nelson Operative Butchers' (current membership 75), the New Zealand Theatrical Workers' (484) and the New

TABLE 23

THE CHANGING COMPOSITION OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, 1915-75

Unions (Group A)	1915	1925	1935	1945	1955	1965	1975		
							1915[a] Proj.	1945[b] Proj.	Actual
ASRS (NUR)	8,247	10,007	6,589	11,700	14,900	13,807	48,657	22,909	11,932
Carpenters	4,335	5,608	3,686	8,335	10,480	15,679	25,576	16,320	15,278
Clothing-trade employees	2,622	4,157	2,923	12,138	12,872	13,526	15,470	23,766	15,202
Engineers	1,408	2,929	1,998	14,220	23,410	32,431	8,307	27,843	43,171
Footwear operatives	1,229	1,170	962	2,872	4,023	3,867	7,251	5,623	4,389[c]

TABLE 23 - Continued

Unions (Group A, contd)	1915	1925	1935	1945	1955	1965	1975 1915 Proj.	1975 1945 Proj.	1975 Actual
Hotel workers	3,475	7,525	5,397	12,942	17,795	24,549	20,502	25,340	34,310
Labourers	4,823	6,241	2,264	6,913	10,319	12,584	28,456	13,536	12,091
Miners	4,621	2,377[d]	2,154[d]	3,069	1,537	1,135	27,624	6,009	1,094[e]
Plumbers and Gasfitters	779	853	654	1,391	1,530	1,410	4,596	2,724	1,604
Printers	1,444	2,352	1,865	3,250	4,663	6,270	8,520	6,363	7,500
Tramway employees	936	2,122	2,135	2,653	2,495	1,657	5,522	5,195	1,826

TABLE 23 - Continued

Unions (Group A, contd)	1915	1925	1935	1945	1955	1965	1975 1915 Proj.	1975 1945 Proj.	1975 Actual
Waterside workers	6,528	6,416	5,536	6,138	6,158	6,793	38,515	12,018	6,661
Woollen mill employees	507	1,141	1,127	4,281	4,167	6,299	2,991	8,394	9,697
NZ workers		9,003[f]	3,066[g]	14,892	16,179	15,594	40,604	29,159	12,165
(Group B)									
Clerical workers	95	129	111	22,560	33,657	41,696	560	44,172	63,706
Drivers	2,121	2,638	1,338	7,729	13,002	16,140	12,514	15,133	19,399
Electrical workers	140	633	754	1,891	4,158	7,070	826	3,703	9,412

TABLE 23 - Continued

Unions (Group B, contd)	1915	1925	1935	1945	1955	1965	1975 1915 Proj.	1975 1945 Proj.	1975 Actual
Freezing workers	2,968	5,895	3,969	13,242	16,513	21,841	17,511	25,928	28,648
Seamen[h]	3,093	3,130	1,747	2,366	2,325	2,074	18,249	4,633	1,708
Shop-assistants	1,749	5,599	3,837	14,444	22,753	21,852	10,319	28,281	30,134
Storemen and packers	319	938	994	4,222	8,218	12,052	1,882	8,267	13,539
All IC & A registered trade unionists	73,991	96,822	74,391	223,027	299,242	346,338			436,623

TABLE 23 - Continued

SOURCE: Department of Labour, Annual Reports, 1915-75.

NOTE: Group A consists of unions or groups of unions, over half of whose members are currently affiliated to the Labour Party. Group B consists of unions or groups of unions, less than half of whose members are currently affiliated to the party.

[a]Membership of unions in 1975 if they had retained same proportion of all trade union members that they held in 1915.

[b]Membership of unions in 1975 if they had retained same proportion of all trade union members that they held in 1945.

[c]Total is for 1974.

[d]Only one of the numerous West Coast miners' unions registered under IC & A Act.

[e]Total is for 1974.

[f]Total is for 1921.

[g]Total is for 1934.

[h]The New Zealand Seamen's Union was affiliated to the Labour Party from 1919 to 1971.

Zealand Hotel Workers' (29,457) - are currently affiliated to the Labour Party. Although the Wellington Clerical Workers' Union was affiliated from 1937 to 1942 and, as Table 4 indicates, eleven out of twenty-five shop-assistants' unions were affiliated to the party as recently as 1950, none of the clerical workers' unions and only one of the shop-assistants' unions (the Nelson Butchers) now belong to the party. Both these groups of unions have grown at a disproportionate rate in the post-war period, as have a number of other groups, the majority of whose members are not affiliated to the Labour Party. These include the drivers', electrical workers', freezing workers' and storemen and packers' unions (see Table 23, group B). The same period has also witnessed a substantial increase in the size of numerous professional associations, none of which are affiliated to the Labour Party.[3]

The trade unions which are affiliated to the Labour Party are thus almost all manual workers' unions. Since these unions are almost all getting smaller and smaller, some in absolute as well as in relative terms, the party's base in the trade union movement is becoming increasingly narrow (see Table 23, group A). Of the major unions or groups of unions, over half of whose members are affiliated to the Labour Party, only the Hotel Workers', the Engineers' and the woollen mill employees' unions have grown at a disproportionate rate over the last fifty

3. See Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 161.

years. The Engineers', Hotel Workers' and Carpenters' unions have emerged as easily the biggest affiliated to the party, providing 47.5 per cent of its affiliated membership in 1975 and holding 43 per cent of the union card votes at conference (see Table 24). However, generalizing from the number of remits that they send to conference and the number of members that they have contributed to the PLP, these unions are not characterized by a high degree of political consciousness. By these indicators, they do not constitute a political 'vanguard' as did the watersiders', miners', labourers', railwaymen's, workers' and seamen's unions in the inter-war years. Most of the latter unions were prominent in the 'Red' Federation or the AOL or both and had once shunned political action. As the depression set in, however (and as Labour appeared likely to become the governing party), they began to realize the advantages of having a political arm and making their muscle felt in it. Almost half of the trade unionists elected to Parliament have come from these unions - sixteen out of thirty-four before, and ten out of twenty-three since, 1945 (see Table 15). But only the railwaymen now send a large number of remits to conference - 113 in thirteen years from 1963 to 1975 inclusive, compared with twenty-three for all the watersiders', miners', labourers' and workers' unions combined (see Table 8).

As these once highly politicized unions have become smaller, their potential influence in the Labour Party (see Table 24) and thus their incentive actively to participate in it have declined and they have become

TABLE 24

MEMBERSHIP AND CONFERENCE VOTES OF SELECTED PARTY-AFFILIATED UNIONS, 1941 AND 1975

Union	1941		1975	
	Members	Votes	Members	Votes
NZ Engineers	5,260	12	43,051	88
NZ Hotel Workers	14,973	41	29,457	60
NZ Carpenters	7,335	19	15,123	32
	27,568	72	87,631	180
% all affiliated unions	14.5	14.6	47.5	43.0
NZ Workers	28,000	57	9,500	20
ASRS (NUR)	13,000	27	11,300	24
Labourers	9,934	27	6,970	17
Waterside Workers	6,203	14	5,819	15
Miners	3,929	14	584	1
	61,006	139	34,173	77
% all affiliated unions	32.1	28.2	18.5	18.4

SOURCES: NZLP, "Delegates Attending 1941 Annual Conference," 1941; "Delegates Attending 1975 Annual Conference," 1975.

politically apathetic or 'unconscious'. (This last trend - common to all unions - is, of course, also related to the growth of capitalist hegemony already discussed.) Moreover, the radical political tradition of which they have been bearers is in danger of dying with them, since no other unions are seeking to perpetuate it - at least, not within the Labour Party. Of the unions currently affiliated to the party, the most radical are probably the Auckland Boilermakers' and Northern Drivers' Union . The former, as we have seen, contributes more remits than any other union for consideration by conference, but still attaches very little importance to participation in Labour Party politics.[4] The Northern Drivers' Union is not always represented at conference and has closer ties with the pro-Soviet Socialist Unity Party, of which the union's secretary, 'Bill' Andersen, is president, than with the Labour Party.

Why, though, have so few white-collar unions decided to affiliate to the Labour Party? Firstly, the work situation of the typical white-collar worker is such that he is likely to be less class-conscious than his blue-collar counterpart. As Mann explains, employers normally subject manual workers to a very close form of control, gearing their pay as closely as possible to their work effort and reinforcing close monetary

4. The president of the Boilermakers' Union describes the issues which union delegates bring back for discussion from the Labour Party as being usually "a decade behind the political times". Finlay, Interview.

control with the physical presence of supervisors. The fact that "virtually all manual workers"[5] are thus 'coerced' generally distinguishes them from office staff, from white-collar workers. "The latter are usually assumed to have internalized the employer's work norms"[6] and consequently are not controlled nearly as rigidly. White-collar workers, according to the secretary of a national union, "have a different approach to trade unionism".[7] They tend to regard themselves as 'assistants' or 'administrators' rather than workers. Where they work, the division between management and labour is less clear-cut than it is on the factory, or shop, floor. As well as being subject to less rigid control, they are closer to the employer and therefore more susceptible to his influence.

But this is only part of the explanation. As New Zealand has become more industrialized and technology more sophisticated, the bargaining power of professional associations and some white-collar unions has been enhanced by their members' possession of qualifications for which there is a constantly growing demand.[8] A member of the

5. Mann, Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, p. 23.

6. Ibid.

7. Ditchfield, Interview.

8. Galbraith argues that education is to advanced industrial society what capital was to early industrial society. If he is correct that the unemployed will come to consist more and more of the uneducated, who are unemployable in the advanced industrial society, then perhaps we should expect unions of manual workers, especially of unskilled manual workers, to become increasingly reliant upon the political protection of the Labour Party. See The New Industrial State, pp. 249, 283.

New Zealand Airline Pilots' Association, which is affiliated to neither the FOL nor the Labour Party, commands a higher salary than the Prime Minister. Unions such as these (although this example is perhaps exceptional) have no need for a political arm. Also, by not registering under the IC & A Act and this not being subject to its provisions, such public service unions as the Public Service Association (1971 membership of 48,741), the Post-Primary Teachers' Association (10,835) and the New Zealand Educational Institute (20,463) became sufficiently prosperous to be able to operate welfare and emergency funds and sponsor a major investment society.[9] Because of legislative restrictions on the sum of money that they may levy from their members, many unions registered under the old IC & A Act were "permanently short of funds".[10] They have been able to maintain welfare funds since 1964, but the proportion of a members' fees that may be channelled into the funds is severely limited. In Britain, unions which paid below-average welfare benefits placed a greater emphasis upon legislative enactment (collective, as opposed to exclusive, goods) as a means of furthering their members' interests and thus demonstrated a greater propensity to affiliate to the Labour Party when it was founded than did those unions which paid

9. See Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 127.

10. Ibid., p. 126.

above-average benefits.[11] If New Zealand unions become steadily more capable of tending to their members' interests themselves, their reliance upon the Labour Party to enact legislation designed to advance that same end is likely to diminish, causing a further decline in the proportion of the unionized work force affiliated to the party.

Lastly, especially in view of the fact that the Labour Party has been in office for only six of the last twenty-five years, white-collar and manual workers' unions alike may have decided that the FOL is a better vehicle than the party for the furtherance of their political objectives. Significantly, white-collar unionists make up 29.2 per cent of the FOL's affiliated membership, compared, of course, with only 16.3 per cent of the party's. Whereas only 27 per cent of the unions registered under the Industrial Relations Act were affiliated to the Labour Party in 1975, a total of 75 per cent was affiliated to the FOL. And, while the proportion of all registered trade unionists affiliated to the Labour Party has declined steadily from 75 per cent in 1941 to 42 per cent in 1975, the proportion affiliated to the FOL has increased - from 79.4 per cent in 1941 to 87.7 per cent in 1975.

11. Arnold J Heidenheimer, "Trade Unions, Benefit Systems, and Party Mobilization Styles: 'Horizontal' Influences in the British Labour and German Social Democratic Parties", Comparative Politics 1 (April 1969): 328.

CHAPTER IV

INTEREST-GROUP REPRESENTATION: THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE FOL

I. AN HISTORICAL EVENT: THE 1951 WATERFRONT DISPUTE

The state of the economy has long determined the attitudes of workers' and employers' organizations toward New Zealand's system of compulsory arbitration of industrial disputes. As long ago as 1927, the Arbitration Court was likened to an economic barometer which registered the conflict between workers and employers and was opposed or supported by each side according to its immediate interests.[1] In 1912 and 1913, the 'Red Fed' unions had attacked, and the employers had supported, compulsory arbitration; during the depression, as unemployment soared and the bargaining power of unions was correspondingly weakened, these attitudes had been reversed. It was probably inevitable, therefore, that the post-war period, characterized as it was by full employment and a persistent shortage of labour (see Table 19), should have produced a militant trade union organization, the TUC, which was intent upon bypassing the arbitration system and using organized labour's considerable bargaining

1. See Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, Pp. 130-31.

power to the fullest advantage in direct negotiations with employers. But both the TUC and the union which dominated it, the NZWWU, were annihilated by a National Government in a prolonged dispute - essentially over the arbitration system - in 1951.

Relations between the Labour Party and the waterside workers' and other anti-arbitrationist unions had been strained for some years before 1951. In the period between 1945 and 1949, while the Labour Party was still in power, New Zealand experienced more industrial unrest than it had in any previous five-year period. The number of workers involved in disputes and the number of working-days lost in disputes in 1949 were the highest ever recorded (see Table 17). The Labour Government regarded strikes as unnecessary while it was in power, supposedly protecting trade union interests, and as a threat to its policy of economic stabilization. Its attitude toward trade union direct action was as expressed by Roberts, when he told conference delegates in 1947:

> The Labour Government has by legislation given the industrial organizations their proper status in society, it has guaranteed full employment, provided a guaranteed wage and improved the living standards of the workers and all those who render service....
>
> ... The Government has already provided the means by which most industrial disputes can be adjusted, and to the ordinary person it would appear that the commonsense thing to do would be to utilize those avenues of adjusting disputes.[2]

Moreover, in the atmosphere of the Cold War, the Prime Minister, Fraser, had come to see all industrial

2. NZLP, Report of the Thirty-first Annual Conference (1947), p. 2.

unrest as the work of Communists, whose 'sinister motives' were generally "concealed under a spurious concern for trade union principles and the welfare of the wage-earners".[3] In 1949, during a dispute in the building industry, the Government deregistered the Auckland branch of the Carpenters' Union. The dispute, according to Fraser, had been organized and controlled by Communist leaders, whose real purpose was to "create industrial anarchy by undermining and destroying the arbitration system".[4] Industrial trouble was being deliberately fomented, magnified and protracted by Communists as part of a policy of "weakening New Zealand in the present international situation".[5]

The unions which were to withdraw from the FOL and form the TUC had revived the syndicalist notions that had been embraced by the 'Red' Federation and the AOL, but had been extinguished temporarily by the depression. The carpenters' dispute wiped out any residual friendship between these unions and the leadership of the Labour Party. As far as the leaders of the militant unions were concerned, the Government's action in deregistering the carpenters had been "unforgivable".[6] By 1949, the NZWWU and the Northern Drivers' Union were contemplating disaffiliating from the party.[7] As the watersiders

3. NZLP, Report of the Thirty-third Annual Conference (1949), p. 13.
4. Ibid., p. 17.
5. Ibid.
6. Bassett, Confrontation '51, p. 11.
7. Ibid., p. 32.

withdrew from the FOL to set up the TUC in 1950, their secretary, 'Toby' Hill, let it be known that his union would do nothing to see that the Labour Party was returned to power.[8] In accordance with the sentiments that Hill expressed and the TUC unions' interpretation of the nature of the relationship between the party and the FOL, the new trade union federation emphasized in its constitution that it would resist domination "by any political party".[9]

The Labour Party initially maintained a very low profile in the dispute between the watersiders, who insisted on their right to bargain directly with employers for increased wages, and the National Government, which insisted that the watersiders use the machinery provided by the IC & A Act. The attitude that it eventually adopted was somewhat equivocal. On the one hand, the party re-affirmed its support for industrial conciliation and arbitration as the basis for the settlement of industrial disputes - which displeased the watersiders - and, on the other, it urged that an attempt be made to settle the existing dispute by a compulsory conference of the disputants, as had been provided for in the 1949 Industrial Relations Act. This method of settlement appealed to neither the Government, which realized it could make political capital out of a prolonged dispute, and the FOL, which was keen to see the rival TUC crushed.

8. Ibid., p. 43.

9. Ibid., p. 47.

On this count, therefore, the party displeased the FOL. Nash's statement thus "satisfied no-one"[10] - except, perhaps, in a sadistic sense, the Government.

As the dispute wore on and the Government's conditions for a settlement became increasingly harsh, the Labour Party's attitude toward the watersiders became increasingly sympathetic. Nash persuaded the watersiders to accept settlement of their wage claim by compulsory arbitration, but the Government then announced it would settle for nothing less than the dissolution of the national union.[11] When it also became clear that the Government and the employers were victimizing individuals among those deregistered watersiders who were applying to return to work, Nash and a number of other Labour MPs advised the men not to return at all.[12] The watersiders welcomed the party's moral support. When the vice-president of the NZWWU addressed the party's annual conference in June 1951, he told delegates that the feeling for the Labour Party within the union had "never been stronger than it is at present because our members believe that the party has recaptured the fighting spirit of 1935".[13] Ironically, it was at this conference that the Labour Party abandoned the objective that the TUC a year earlier had adopted:

10. Ibid., p. 144.
11. Ibid., pp. 150-51.
12. Ibid., p. 159.
13. Quoted ibid., p. 179.

'the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange'.

To the extent that the party moved nearer to the watersiders, it moved further away from the FOL. A joint meeting of the executive members of the FOL and the party was held and Nash, as party leader, addressed the FOL's annual conference; otherwise there was virtually no communication at all between the two organizations during the dispute. To Fintan Patrick Walsh, the dominant figure in the FOL, the party seemed to be "in enemy hands".[14] Nash had to tread carefully or else the party's relationship with the FOL would be irreparably damaged. After the dispute had ended and the Government had called a 'snap' election, the watersiders' president, Harold Barnes, urged members of his union "to do all within their power"[15] to secure the election of a Labour Government if they wanted to return to work on the waterfront. But the watersiders' support was harmful not only to the Labour Party's electoral prospects - since the electorate had been fed on a diet of aggressive anti-unionism for several months while emergency regulations had been in force and normal democratic freedoms suspended - but also to the prospects of a reconciliation with the FOL, which is reported to have considered standing its own candidates in Labour seats.[16] Nash was forced to renounce the

14. Ibid., p. 178.

15. Ibid., p. 198.

16. Ibid., p. 199.

watersiders, thereby diminishing the enthusiasm with which they and their TUC colleagues subsequently campaigned for the party.[17] In the end, Nash and the party, by attempting to negotiate a 'middle course' in the dispute, alienated neither the FOL nor the TUC totally, but both substantially.

The Labour Party lost more trade unionists from its membership between May 1951 and May 1952 than it has hitherto in any other year. The total number of trade union members financially affiliated to the party fell by nearly 25 per cent from 166,521 to 127,244 (see Table 2) and the number of unions financially affiliated from 201 to 159 (see Table 3). However, this decline was not exclusively a consequence of the waterfront dispute and its outcome. Party records reveal that forty-eight trade unions either disaffiliated from the party or lapsed into unfinancial membership (most of them later to disaffiliate completely) between 1951 and 1952.[18] Of these unions, twenty-eight, containing about 15,000 members, had not withdrawn from the FOL to join the TUC. Since the demise of the TUC actually strengthened the FOL, it seems unlikely that the waterfront dispute would have motivated these unions to leave the party - they would have had no grudge to bear against the Labour Party, unless they had happened to sympathize with the watersiders' cause. Although the disaffiliation of the majority of the twenty-eight

17. Ibid., p. 200.

18. NZLP, "Delegates Attending 1951 Annual Conference"; "Delegates Attending 1952 Annual Conference". (Mimeographed).

unions must remain unexplained, a few of these unions, at least, were likely to have been affected by the National Government's passage in 1950 of a Political Disabilities Removal Amendment Act, which made it illegal for trade unions to contribute to the funds of a political party without the prior approval of an absolute majority of its entire financial membership and which meant that in any affiliation ballot, those who did not vote would be counted among those who opposed affiliation. Ballots in two unions of four that are known to have held them failed to produce an absolute majority of the financial membership in favour of affiliation, although, in both cases, a majority of those who voted approved.[19] In the ballots held by the other two unions, the majority by which affiliation was approved was reduced substantially by the inclusion of those who did not vote with those who opposed affiliation.[20] According to Alan McDonald, who was then general secretary of the Labour Party, the 1950 Act had little effect upon the number of affiliated unions.[21]

19. The unions were the New Zealand Bakers' and Pastry Cooks' Union and the New Zealand Shipwrights' Union, whose combined membership was less than 2,000. See R M Martin, "Compulsory Unionism in New Zealand" (MA Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1954), p. 124.

20. The Wellington Rubber Workers' and New Zealand Tramway Employees' unions.

21. Correspondence quoted in Bentley, "Trade Union Financial Assistance to the NZLP", pp. 42-43. The current party secretary, John Wybrow, identifies the 1950 Act as the major cause of the decline in the number of trade unions affiliated to the party during the post-war period. However, as McDonald was secretary when the effect of the Act would have been felt, his testimony must be accepted. In any case, the second Labour Government again amended the Act in 1960 to enable trade unions to contribute to the party's funds on the same basis as they had before 1950.

"One or two smaller unions",[22] a majority of whose financial members were unlikely actively to have approved affiliation, did leave the party, but the great majority of those affiliated continued to make financial contributions to the party either in the form of 'written-off' loans or by levying their members on the job.[23] Whatever the reasons were for the departure of these twenty-eight unions, only nine subsequently re-affiliated to the party and only two - the Nelson Operative Butchers' Union and the Auckland Wharf Foremen's Union - were still affiliated in 1975.

The other twenty unions, whose combined membership exceeded 22,000, had all been associated with the ill-fated TUC, as had four which had left the party in 1950.[24] The affiliations of four unions of the twenty - the NZWWU, the Wellington Drivers' Union, and the Nelson and Wellington freezing workers' unions - lapsed when they were deregistered during the dispute. The drivers' union has never re-affiliated to the party, the Wellington Freezing Workers' Union re-affiliated in 1970, but has since left again, and the Nelson freezing workers are now affiliated to the party as part of the Canterbury,

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p. 32.

24. The Auckland Boilermakers' and General Labourers' unions, the Dunedin Tramwaymen's Union and the Brunnerton Miners' Union. The boilermakers and tramwaymen re-affiliated in 1952 and the labourers in 1962. The miners' union is now non-existent.

Marlborough and Nelson Meat Workers' Union.[25] The NZWWU was fragmented into twenty-six separate port unions. Although they formed a national federation in 1967, re-affiliation to the Labour Party on a national basis has never been seriously proposed.[26] The individual unions slowly drifted back into the party: the Timaru and Nelson unions (1952), the Westport and New Plymouth unions (1953), the Port Chalmers' union (1954), the Wellington and Napier unions (1956), the Lyttelton union (between 1960 and 1964), the Gisborne union (1963), the Auckland union (1964), the Whangarei union (1968) and the Mount Maunganui and Tauranga union (1970). Thus, by 1975, twelve out of twenty separate waterside workers' unions, accounting for 87 per cent of the NZWWF's membership, had affiliated to the party. In the course of the 1951 dispute, the watersiders' enthusiasm for the Labour Party had been rekindled. But, although it is claimed that their defeat left no legacy of bitterness between their unions and the party, they were, at the very least, "disappointed"[27] that the party had not supported them more strongly. The depth and persistence of this disappointment is reflected in the slowness with which the watersiders, traditionally New Zealand's most highly politicized workers, straggled back into the party in

25. Among the unions currently affiliated to the party, the Runanga State Miners' Union, the Christchurch Rubber Workers' Union and the Auckland Freezing Workers' Union were also TUC unions that had disaffiliated from the party in 1951.

26. Edward Thompson, Interview, Wellington, December 17, 1975.

27. Thompson, Interview.

the 1950's and 1960's.

In retrospect, however, the TUC unions' disappointment with the equivocation of the Labour Party during the waterfront dispute was probably less important than the party's estrangement of the FOL. During the dispute, Walsh had discovered that he could work very closely and very well, if need be, with a National Government. Simultaneously, the Labour Party's rather sympathetic attitude toward the watersiders and the TUC had antagonized him and his dislike of Nash, which was mutual, had intensified. Under Walsh's leadership, therefore, the FOL came to assume a role that made it less necessary for its affiliated unions to maintain links with the Labour Party as well. The most important consequence of the waterfront dispute for union-party relations was identified by Bassett when he stated: "One of the militants' aims of the immediate post-war years, that of making the industrial movement its own man, has most certainly been achieved".[28]

Yet the trade union movement has become its 'own man' neither solely nor primarily as a result of the 1951 waterfront dispute, but rather as a result of an historical process which the dispute sharply accelerated. We now turn to consider how trade union involvement in the Labour Party has been affected by the gradual institutionalization of the trade union movement, along with other organized interests, in the post-war period. For, to a much greater extent than in the years before World War II, organized labour now participates in the governmental decision-making process in

28. Bassett, Confrontation '51, p. 212.

its own right, irrespective of which political party happens to be in power.

II. THE HISTORICAL PROCESS

Trade unions have everywhere grown up in societies whose economic and social agencies tended to favour the interests of capital "at the expense of /those of/ labour".[29] If they were to have any chance of remedying the injustices which were the workers' lot, they had to form their own political parties or else ally themselves with existing ones. In the twentieth century, however, trade union movements in most advanced industrialized societies have been gradually integrated into society and recognized by governments as "essential components of the legitimate decision-making establishment".[30] In Britain, for example, "well-established, regular and quite formal consultation ... goes on between members of the government /whether it is Labour or Conservative/ and the representatives of the trade unions on matters of policy".[31]

Trade unions used to band together simultaneously to seek protection in numbers - to make "an injury to one an injury to all"[32] - and to maximize the effectiveness of their industrial action. Today, however, one of the main roles of the FOL in New Zealand is to

29. Williams, "Trade Unions and Government in New Zealand", p. 90.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. This was part of the IWW preamble adopted by the 'Red' Federation. See Holland, O'Flynn and Ross, The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike, p. 13.

minimize, rather than exacerbate or widen, industrial conflict. Many trade unions affiliate to the central organization in their respective movements for reasons quite different from those which could be considered 'class-conscious'. Again in Britain, four major white-collar unions abandoned a separate white-collar congress that they had created - the Conference of Professional and Public Service Organizations (COPPSO) - and affiliated during the 1960's to the TUC. The decision in each case was "a response to the TUC's presence on the national planning bodies and COPPSO's exclusion from them.... By staying outside the TUC they would have /had/ no access to policy-making bodies which directly affected their bargaining position".[33] In the words of the national executive council of the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO):

> So long as NALGO remains outside the TUC it must become a powerless spectator on the sidelines. Only inside the TUC has it any hope of influencing national economic and wages policy and adequately protecting its members.[34]

The integration of New Zealand trade unions into their society can be considered to have begun in 1868, when they were given their legal existence in the Trade Unions Act. Although they had to await the election of the first Labour Government in 1935 to become an integral part of the governmental decision-making process, trade

33. Bain, Coates and Ellis, Social Stratification and Trade Unionism, p. 92.

34. Ibid.

unions did actually communicate with Liberal and Reform administrations in earlier years. Although the leaders of the 'Red' Federation regarded political parties as "rather spineless organizations and individuals", they "never" missed an opportunity of advising Cabinet ministers of "the urgent need for this or that reform"[35] which could be achieved only by legislative enactment. They were thus able to secure "many reforms of a lasting character".[36] Trade unions were represented independently, for example, at the National Industrial Conference, convened by the Reform Government primarily to consider the problem of unemployment, in 1928. At the party's annual conference in 1930, Fraser accused the president of the AOL, Cook, of having co-operated "in a movement among certain trade union officials"[37] to exclude Labour Party MPs from deputations that they were sending to meet Cabinet ministers. For all this, however, far less consultation took place between trade unions and the government in this period than takes place today.

After the Labour Party came to power in 1935, representatives of the FOL attended Labour Party caucus meetings and, during World War II, the president of the FOL, McLagan, became Minister of National Service (Later Minister of Labour, Mines, Employment and Immigration) in the Labour Cabinet. As the party president, Roberts, argued, admonishing the militant unions, at the 1947

35. Hickey, 'Red' Fed. Memoirs, P. 32.

36. Ibid.

37. NZLP, Report of the Fourteenth Annual Conference (1930), p. 11.

conference: "When the working class of New Zealand elected a Labour Government, trade unionism came of age"[38] and was given its proper status.

The close co-operation that characterized relations between the government and the FOL at this time seems to have been based primarily on the close personal links among the leaders "and particularly between Fraser and Walsh",[39] but, in 1949, legislation was finally enacted to put it on a formal basis. The function of the Industrial Advisory Council, described by Fraser as "the most important piece of legislation"[40] passed by the government in its last year in office, was to be "to inquire into and make reports and recommendations to the Minister /of Labour/ on such ways and means of improving industrial relations and industrial welfare as from time to time appear to be practicable".[41] Comprising eight representatives from the FOL, eight from the Employers' Federation, and an independent chairman, it first met in 1952. In 1963, it was reported that the council had discussed such matters as joint consultation in industry, labour turnover, fact-finding in industrial disputes, channels of communication in

38. NZLP, Report of the Thirty-first Annual Conference (1947), p. 2.

39. Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 156.

40. NZLP, Report of the Thirty-fourth Annual Conference (1950), p. 14.

41. Woods, Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration in New Zealand (Wellington: Government Printer, 1963), p. 181.

industry, incentive schemes, and productivity. It had provided "a useful forum for discussion" and had been "very successful in exploring and establishing common ground between workers and employers in such matters".[42] However, as a result of the Arbitration Court's nil wage-order in 1968 and the trade union movement's unilateral decision to bypass the arbitration system and enter into direct collective bargaining with employers, the council, which had been meeting quite regularly, went into recess. Communications between the National Government and the FOL began to break down, especially after the long-serving Minister of Labour, Thomas Shand, died in 1969. The Government began to ignore the trade union movement; "measures which would normally have been discussed with the Federation of Labour were pushed through without consultation".[43] For this reason, more than for any other, the FOL decided to give "all possible support"[44] to the Labour Party in the 1972 General Election. Significantly, this had never previously been necessary.

The third Labour Government provided for the establishment of a new, but similar, council in the Industrial Relations Act 1973. The Industrial Relations Council, which consists of the Minister of Labour (the chairman), the Secretary of Labour, and ten representatives each

42. Ibid., pp. 181-82.

43. Tom Skinner, "All Possible Support", in Right Out: Labour Victory '72. The Inside Story, ed. Brian Edwards (Wellington: Reed, 1973), p. 129.

44. Ibid.

from the FOL and the Employers' Federation, first met in August 1974. Its functions are much the same as its predecessor's - to facilitate co-operation between organized management, organized labour and the government in the formulation and implementation of manpower policies, the development of codes of practice relating to industrial relations and the improvement of industrial organizations and industrial welfare.[45]

The Industrial Relations Council symbolizes the integration of the New Zealand trade union movement into the governmental decision-making process. But the FOL is also represented on numerous other statutory agencies, including, among others, the Consumer Council, the Metric Advisory Board, the Immigration Advisory Council, the Trades Certification Board, the Government Superannuation Board, the Vocational Training Council, the Apprenticeship Commission, the New Zealand Shipping Corporation, the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women, the Waterfront Industry Tribunal, the Industrial Commission, the Industrial Court, the Construction Advisory Council Committee and the board of the Reserve Bank. Trade unions are thus able - via the FOL and its delegates on the statutory agencies - to take part, or at least to be implicated, in the formulation of governmental policy in a large number of areas - irrespective, moreover, of whether the Labour Party or the National Party is in power. Apart from exceptional

45. Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited, "Trade Unions and Industrial Relations - New Zealand", in ANZ Quarterly Survey 24 (October 1975), p. 9.

periods, as between 1970 and 1972, the FOL is in touch with the government constantly and on a wide range of issues. On matters of urgency or of special importance, it is likely to seek an audience with the government - or the initiative for a meeting may come from the government itself.

Before World War II, then, trade unions might have believed - understandably - that affiliating to the Labour Party and participating in the formulation of its policy was the only available means of having their policy preferences ultimately translated into enacted legislation. Now, as we have seen, they have other ways of getting what they want. Moreover, the fact that the National Party has been in power for nineteen of the last twenty-five years means that there has been a particularly compelling reason for trade unions to adopt alternative means of influencing governmental policy to affiliation to, and active participation within, the Labour Party. There has been a strong incentive for them visibly to play down their involvement in the Labour Party so as not to antagonize the 'party of government' and prejudice their chances of having it implement at least some of the policies that they prefer.[46]

The FOL has also come to offer services to affiliated trade unions that were once provided more or less exclusively

46. Conversely, when a given interest group is associated with a political party which is entrenched in power, there is a tendency for them to form an especially intimate relationship - as in the case of the Social Democratic Party and organized labour in Sweden and the conservative Liberal-Democratic Party and big business in Japan.

by the Labour Party. In Sweden, for a comparison, the Social Democratic Party was founded almost a decade before the first central trade union organization. It therefore tended to dominate the labour movement at first, providing "critical services for the unions, especially those weaker unions that were in the great majority".[47] The New Zealand experience appears to have been very similar, political unity having been achieved in the labour movement in 1916, but industrial unity not until the FOL was founded in 1937. In the interim period, the functions that normally would have been performed by a single central trade union organization were carried out partly by the Labour Party and the AOL in collaboration, but mainly by the Labour Party alone.

A resolution adopted at an open conference convened by the AOL in December 1923 instructed the two organizations to set up an information and research bureau to provide data for use by affiliated unions in negotiations to obtain awards and agreements. Little is known of the history of the bureau, except that it seems to have been staffed and operated solely by the party, whose representatives stressed its utility when they tried to persuade the New Zealand Workers' Union, which belonged to the AOL, to affiliate to the party as well. Addressing the union's annual conference in 1930, the general secretary of the party, Walter Nash, said the party had helped "with all the means at its disposal"[48] when unions had tried to improve wages and working conditions or to

47. Kassalow, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations, p. 33.

48. NZLP, Report of the Fourteenth Annual Conference (1930), p. 10.

resist attacks on the living standards of workers. As the party's annual conference report recorded:

> With the limited resources it had available, the Labour Party had set up an Information Bureau for the definite purpose of supplying facts and figures to assist in the presentation of the workers' case. The information supplied by the bureau had greatly assisted the Seamen, Shipwrights, and other industrial organizations in building up their cases for awards and agreements. The figures and tables supplied, combined with the advocacy of Mr Arthur Cook and Mr James Roberts, were responsible for the increase of 2/6d per hundred in shearing rates.... The information was so complete, and the facts so carefully prepared, that the court was compelled to increase the rates. This increase has placed an additional £30,000 every year into the pockets of the members of the union.[49]

Today the Labour Party performs no such tasks for its affiliated unions, except perhaps to a minor extent through the industrial relations sub-committee of the national executive, which was established in 1972. A research unit was set up during the term of the third Labour Government, but to serve only the PLP. Until the last few years, the FOL, on the other hand, had the only full-time research staff (albeit a small one) in the entire trade union movement, excepting the public service unions.[50] If trade unions did not possess the resources to compile their own data for use, for example, in award negotiations, they would affiliate to the FOL, rather than to the Labour Party, to obtain them.

Certain historical events and certain leaders have also precipitated the FOL's assumption of the role of an independent interest group, protecting and promoting the interests of its members as vigorously and as effect-

49. Ibid.

50. Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 127.

ively under National as under Labour administrations. The scars of easily the most important of the events, the 1951 waterfront dispute, had still not healed by the time the second Labour Government brought down the infamous 'Black Budget', which further displeased the FOL, in 1958. Of the leaders, the most important has probably been Fintan Patrick Walsh, the dominant personality in the FOL from the time of World War II until his death in 1963.

Walsh had been a close personal friend of Fraser, but Nash, Fraser's successor as leader of the Labour Party, was "everything that Walsh was not".[51] Especially after the waterfront dispute, relations between Nash and Walsh were, to say the least, cool. Thus, although Walsh veered erratically from one side of the ideological spectrum to the other during his eleven-year term as formal leader of the FOL, the "one constant thread"[52] in his policy was his concern for the independence of the trade union movement. His approach produced results. As the FOL secretary of the same period subsequently remarked: "Whatever the criticism of him in the rank-and-file from time to time, he was always successful in bringing home the bacon".[53] For most of the time, Walsh was able to work amicably with National Cabinet ministers, even to the point where, on one occasion, he is supposed to have been consulted by the party's leaders before they chose

51. Douglas, Interview.

52. Roth, "Trade Unions", p. 15.

53. Kenneth Baxter, quoted in Christchurch Star, February 1, 1969.

a Minister of Labour.[54]

Adopting a similarly flexible, pragmatic approach, Walsh's successor, Sir Thomas Skinner, has tended to de-emphasize the trade union movement's organic links with the Labour Party.[55] The FOL and the Labour Party have very similar views, according to Sir Thomas, but they are functionally separate. The Labour Party seeks to become the government, "charged with governing in the interest of all the people",[56] whereas the FOL's responsibility is to its member unions. His view is that, although a Labour Government is rather more likely to legislate in the interests of wage-earners than a National Government, the trade union movement is "necessarily and essentially non-political"[57] because it has to deal with the government of the day, whatever its colour, on matters which concern the members of trade unions. Sir Thomas's rationale for the lack of liaison between the FOL and the Labour Party when it is not in power (as reflected, for example, in the infrequent meetings of the Joint Council of Labour) is that "the opposition party has little real influence in Parliament".[58] When votes are taken, it invariably loses; so it is generally more effective for the FOL to approach the government

54. This revelation is contained in the Walsh papers, held by the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington.

55. See section on Joint Council of Labour above.

56. Skinner, "All Possible Support", p. 130.

57. Ibid., p. 123.

58. Ibid., p. 132.

on its own behalf. Overall, the attitudes of Skinner and the FOL secretary, James Knox, toward the Labour Party are highly instrumental. They are typified by Knox's statement to the party's 1971 conference that the FOL supported the Labour Party "because of the assurances which had been given of what a Labour Government will [sic] do when elected".[59]

The attitudes and behaviour of important individual actors have thus reinforced the effect of historical events and historical processes (including the development of a complex interest-group structure in an increasingly industrialized and differentiated society in the post-war period as well as the assimilation of trade unions into the decision-making 'establishment') that have induced trade unions to place a steadily greater emphasis upon the FOL vis-à-vis the Labour Party as the articulator of their political interests. By separating itself from the Labour Party and developing into an increasingly independent interest group, the FOL has enhanced its political effectiveness and diminished the need for trade unions to retain a separate and distinctively political arm. Thus, to a considerable extent, the FOL has prospered at the Labour Party's expense. But it is well to remember that leaders of the FOL and the Labour Party are not completely impotent actors in the grip of irresistible historical forces and that their behaviour is neither wholly 'determined' nor wholly inconsequential. If the post-war leaders of the Labour

59. NZLP, Report of the Fifty-fifth Annual Conference (1971), pp. 33-34.

Party had been willing to try, they might have been able to arrest or slow down the flight of the trade unions from the party. The party's first leader, Holland, campaigned ceaselessly between 1919 and 1933 to bring all the trade unions within the ambit of the Labour Party. But, except for a brief period from about 1965 to 1970, the post-war leadership of the Labour Party has ignored the diminution of the party's base of support in the trade union movement. Why?

CHAPTER V

OLIGARCHY IN THE PARTY: THE NEWLY-HEGEMONIC 'INTELLECTUALS'

Socialist working-class parties have characteristically placed a strong formal emphasis on the maintenance of intra-party democracy, whose operation, in theory, is supposed to enable rank-and-file members to govern the parties and determine their policies. In the case of the New Zealand Labour Party, which certainly saw itself initially as a socialist working-class party, the annual conference remains formally "the supreme governing body of the party".[1] Over the years, however, a great difference has developed between 'theory' and practice' in the distribution of power among the various party organs. Conference still monopolizes the right to alter the party's constitution and rules, but, as we have seen, its role now is to discuss, rather than formulate, policy. In any event, its policy-making role, even in the narrow sense of discussion, is secondary to its other role of projecting an attractive image of the party to the national electorate.

In the twentieth century, the evolution of political parties, whether or not they profess to be democratic in

1. NZLP, Constitution and Rules, revised ed. (1975), p. 4.

their internal processes, has been dominated, according to Duverger, by two essential facts: (i) an increase in the authority of party leaders (at the expense of members) and (ii) a tendency toward personal forms of authority.[2] Only a fixed amount of control over the party and its policy is, of course, available. Thus, to the extent that oligarchy grows, intra-party democracy is diminished. Arguably, once they become unable to force their policy preferences upon the leaders, rank-and-file members begin to leave the party.[3] This may explain why the membership of most socialist working-class parties has declined in the period since World War II.[4]

Oligarchy is often seen to be at the root of the widespread ideological transformation of socialist working-class parties. For members, who are primarily interested in policy outputs, electoral success is a means to an end, but for party leaders, who have the prospect of enjoying the benefits of office, it may be an end in itself. To win elections, a party must gain the support of voters whose commitment to the party and its ideology is much weaker than that of party members. To gain the allegiance of these voters, it must "moderate its dogma, must provide continuity of leadership to give an assurance of stability, /and/ must devote itself to organizing its vote rather than maintaining the purity of its doctrine".[5]

2. Duverger, Political Parties, p. 168.

3. See Wellhofer and Hennessey, "Some Analytic Approaches to Oligarchy", pp. 297-300.

4. See Kendall, The Labour Movement in Europe, pp. 379-89.

5. Geraint Parry, Political Elites (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 43.

I. THE UNIONS AND THE IDEOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE PARTY

The ideological transformation of the Labour Party from a party which proclaimed "boldly and fearlessly"[6] that its objective was the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange into one which has now deleted the term 'socialism' from its vocabulary, combined with the huge decline in its branch membership since 1940, indicates that it has been far from immune to oligarchical tendencies in its sixty-year history. But what has been the role of the affiliated trade unions in the party's ideological transformation? Has ideological change taken place with or without their approval?

Historically, 'direct' working-class parties - those whose members belong 'directly' to the party via its branches - have tended to preoccupy themselves with the maintenance of ideological purity. By comparison, 'indirect' working-class parties - those which have been formed by trade unions and whose members are mostly trade unionists affiliated to the party through the unions - have tended to be much more pragmatic, giving precedence to "immediately effective reforms" over "complete transformation of society".[7] As Duverger concludes: "The Trade Union formation of the Labour and similar parties explains their interest in concrete reforms and their

6. Holland, in his maiden speech to Parliament in 1919, in Speeches and Documents on New Zealand History, p. 232.

7. Duverger, Political Parties, p. 14.

lack of enthusiasm for doctrine". (Italics mine).[8]

The tendency for trade unions and their political arms to attach greater importance to immediate, pragmatic social reforms than to the transformation of capitalism has been noted also by Michels and Lenin. To Michels, who formulated the 'iron law' that 'who says organization, says oligarchy', trade unions were a conservative influence upon socialist parties, inevitably undercutting any "serious socialist, revolutionary appeals"[9] with their day-to-day needs. Lenin emphasized the necessity of a revolutionary party of bourgeois intellectuals which would serve as the 'vanguard of the proletariat'. Trade unionism, he declared, meant "the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie".[10] The task of the revolutionary vanguard was hence to "combat spontaneity, to divert the working-class movement from this spontaneous trade-union striving to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social-Democracy".[11] Trade-unionist politics was the "bourgeois politics of the working class"[12] - the struggle for better working conditions and better terms for workers in the sale of their labour, but definitely not in itself the "revolutionary

8. Ibid.

9. Kassalow, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations, p. 44.

10. V I Lenin, What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement, sixth revised ed. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), p. 41.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., p. 83.

struggle for freedom and for socialism".[13]

Trade unions appear to have influenced the ideological development of the New Zealand Labour Party in the manner that Lenin and Michels would have predicted. In Lenin's terms, it has practised trade-unionist, rather than revolutionary Social-Democratic, politics. Compared with other working-class parties, the Labour parties in both New Zealand and Australia have been moderate in their objectives and, since they often represented "little more than the aims of the trade unions with whom they had close connections",[14] have been "more purely worker-oriented than socialist".[15] The dominant tendency among trade union delegates at the party's annual conference is for them to support the status quo and defer to the views expressed by the party leadership - to a much greater degree than delegates representing other organizations.[16] Trade unionists on the party's national executive are "much more cautious"[17] than other members in their policy preferences: they have been described as mostly "time-servers",[18] rubber-stamping decisions made elsewhere, ensuring that meetings are completed by lunch-time, and,

13. Ibid., pp. 61-62.

14. Epstein, Political Parties in Western Democracies, p. 137.

15. Ibid.

16. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", pp. 336-37, 338-39. Douglas, Interview.

17. Stan Rodger, Interview, Wellington, January 16, 1975.

18. Michael Hirschfeld, Interview, Wellington, December 17, 1975.

above all, determined not to rock the boat.[19]

Although it adopted the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange as its objective in 1916 and retained it until 1951, the party, having been thus influenced by the trade union movement, falls within the same broad State humanitarian, but fundamentally liberal, as opposed to socialist, ideological tradition that has dominated New Zealand political culture since the late nineteenth century. Hence Savage's statement in 1935 that the first Labour Government would complete the work that had been begun by Seddon. Ideologically, at least, the party and the trade unions have never been very far apart, and, in the 1930's especially, with the former trade unionists dominant in the party leadership, they were virtually totally united. In Parliament, Labour Party MPs persistently expressed "the union point of view".[20] The unions and the party made the same diagnosis of the causes of the depression - underconsumption - and proposed the same Keynesian, rather than Marxist, remedy - expanded purchasing power. The trade unionist nature of the first Labour Government's objectives was nowhere better exemplified than at the 1946 conference, at which Fraser enumerated its four outstanding achievements. In addition to the building of the social security system, they included the ending of unemployment, the establishment of adequate wage-levels, and

19. Hirschfeld claims that trade unionists organized his defeat in the party's national executive elections in 1972.

20. Stone, "A History of Trade Unionism", p. 162.

the introduction of the forty-hour week and paid holidays.[21]

As it had seen the need to broaden its electoral appeal if it was to be a successful Parliamentary party and as social problems became more pressing with the onset of the depression, the party had gradually retreated from its socialist objective and as early as 1928 had adopted an approach that was "pragmatic, utilitarian and reformist.... essentially urgent and immediate, less concerned with principles than with measures".[22] By 1933, the party's platform had, in effect, been discarded and replaced by policies that were presented to the electorate triennially in the election manifesto. Virtually no mention was made of any socialist objective which specific policies were designed to bring closer to realization. Indeed, the party's election manifesto in 1935 proclaimed that Labour's objective was "to utilize to the maximum degree the wonderful resources of the Dominion".[23] Finally, in 1951, conference decided formally to abandon the original socialist objective, its replacement being "to promote and protect the freedom of the people and their political, social, economic and cultural welfare".[24] Since the

21. NZLP, Report of the Thirtieth Annual Conference (1946), p. 9.

22. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 107.

23. NZLP, "Labour Has A Plan", in Paul, Humanism in Politics, p. 165.

24. Milburn, "Socialism and Social Reform in Twentieth-Century New Zealand", Political Science 12 (September 1960): 176.

inclusion of its former 'purpose' with its objective in 1974, the party's objective has been not only to promote and protect the freedom and welfare of the people, but also to "educate the public in the principles of democratic socialism and economic and social co-operation; to elect competent men and women to Parliament and local authorities for the purpose of giving effect to the party policy; and to ensure the just distribution of the production and services of New Zealand for the benefit of all the people".[25] The replacement of the original, specific socialist objective with one which is essentially open-ended and vague aptly symbolizes the transformation of Labour from an 'ideological' into a 'pragmatic' party in its rhetoric as well as in its deeds.

But the dilution of the party's socialist ideology is not adequately captured simply by modifications made to its objective. The latter has remained fundamentally unaltered since 1951, but the Labour Party, especially its leadership, talks much less of capitalism and socialism now than it did even then. In 1974, for example, the Prime Minister, Kirk, was able to write an article on the philosophy of the Labour Party without once using either term.[26] In a list of its principles drafted in 1952, the party had declared that:

> ... For most of the last hundred years capitalism

25. NZLP, Constitution and Rules, revised ed. (1975), p. 3.

26. Norman Kirk, "The Philosophy of the Labour Party", in New Zealand Politics: A Reader, pp. 142-46.

> has been the main enemy of the brotherhood of men. By placing the rights of property before the rights of man, capitalism enslaves humanity to economic forces. It divides class against class, nation against nation, and race against race. It condemns millions to unemployment, economic exploitation and political oppression. World crisis, imperialism and war are among its inevitable consequences.
>
> The New Zealand Labour Party, as other Socialist parties, was born as a movement of protest against the diseases inherent in capitalist society....
>
> Labour aims to build a new society in freedom and by peaceful means. True socialism can be achieved only through democracy just as democracy can be fully realized only through socialism.[27]

In the New Zealand Labour Party, as in the Western European Communist parties, "doctrinal impoverishment has reached the summit: the intellectual life of the leaders is remarkably restricted, no real theoretical and doctrinal activity can be observed among them".[28]

The Labour Party's retreat from socialism has been attributed largely to "the purely trade unionist approach to labour problems which has been a controlling influence in the party".[29] The great majority of the party's affiliated unions certainly supported its abandonment of its socialist objective and have consistently opposed its restoration - the Dunedin Operative Bootmakers' Union even tried to persuade conference to abolish or amend it as

27. NZLP, "Principles of Labour", 1952. (Mimeographed.)

28. Duverger, Political Parties, pp. 175-76. In contrast, the first party leader, Holland, wrote a large number of pamphlets, including one on the Marxian theory of value, and kept a vast personal library of political literature.

29. Milburn, "Socialism and Social Reform in Twentieth-Century New Zealand", pp. 182-83.

early as 1923.[30] The FOL's replacement of its socialist objective actually preceded the party's by two years. Furthermore, if a large number of trade union delegates had wanted the party to retain it, conference's decision in favour of its abandonment would not have been so clear-cut - a total of 159 votes was cast for the socialist objective and 359 against. Three unions - the Wellington Waterside Workers' Union (1958), the ASRS (1964) and the tramway employees' national union (1964 and 1973) - have since sought unsuccessfully to have the old objective restored. But the 1964 remit, for example, was lost by 354 card votes to ninety-three, the convener of the Constitution and Rules Committee having first complained that the adoption of the remit "would not only turn the clock back for over a quarter of a century but would also revive the old fears and misunderstandings which were associated with the aims and objects of the party during its earlier years".[31] Evidently, very few union delegates disagreed.[32]

30. NZLP, Report of the Seventh Annual Conference (1923), p. 11.

31. NZLP, Report of the Forty-eighth Annual Conference (1964), p. 23.

32. A few trade unionists have been disaffected by the Labour Party's ideological transformation. The secretary of the FOL from 1944 to 1969, Kenneth Baxter, maintained that, of all the leaders of the Labour Party, only the first, Holland, had remained "faithful to the movement". The Labour Prime Ministers - Savage, Fraser and Nash - only tried to "make the capitalist system work better than the capitalists could themselves". (Christchurch Star, February 1, 1969.) The president of the Auckland Boilermakers' Union attributes the party's abandonment of socialism to "sheer opportunism" and "the political expediency of individuals". (Finlay, Interview.)

II. AUTONOMY FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY LABOUR PARTY

The trade unions' attitude toward the ideological transformation of the party indicates that if oligarchy has indeed precipitated the transformation, then the unions have supported, if not conspired to assist it. However, before we decide whether they have been the victims or perpetrators of oligarchy, what concrete evidence is there of a shift in the distribution of power away from the rank-and-file membership toward the party leadership and the Parliamentary party as a whole?

Until Labour came to power in 1935, the annual conference was sovereign, in the last instance, in the party's policy-making process. Although it does not seem to have initiated the bulk of the party's policy, no proposals could be incorporated into the party's electoral platform without its prior approval. The policies spelt out in the platform were intended to be the 'planks' or steps toward the attainment of the party's objective. Conference appears to have confined itself mainly to ratifying proposed policy, delegating the power to formulate it to specially constituted committees. The party's 1935 election policy, for example, was formulated by an elected policy committee comprising seven members, five of whom, significantly, were MPs.

Labour's election to office rapidly diminished the influence of conference over party policy. The party leaders, Savage and Fraser, were quick to champion the responsibilities of the new administration to the wider electorate. As far as they were concerned, the government would be bound by conference decisions only after

they had been included in an election manifesto that voters had given it a mandate to implement.[33] Fraser warned conference delegates in 1937 that he would be "dishonest" if he let them believe that "any resolution passed compelled the Government to do anything, regardless of consequences".[34] Simultaneously, democracy was being subverted even within the PLP.[35]

Despite attempts to downgrade its role, however, conference did not immediately become impotent. As party president, Roberts stressed that the PLP was accountable for its actions (or non-actions) to conference. The latter, he said, was "the parliament of the Labour Party"[36] and if MPs did not do what conference wanted, then it would find the men who would. Conference did actually combine with the party caucus to pressure Cabinet and an unwilling Minister of Finance, Nash, into nationalizing the Bank of New Zealand in 1945 and Prime Minister Fraser into taking the issue of compulsory military training to a national referendum in 1949. On isolated occasions since then, it has managed to commit the party leadership to policies about which the leaders had misgivings, but, on balance, it is much less powerful today than it was before 1935. In effect, it has retained "only minimal limitations over the freedom of action"[37]

33. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 450.

34. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, pp. 212-13.

35. John A Lee, Simple on a Soapbox (Auckland: Collins, 1963), pp. 55, 83-84, 98-101, 137-38. The essence of Lee's account must be regarded as factual.

of the PLP.

Although all the policy remits that conference endorses are referred directly or indirectly to the policy committee, only a minority of them reach the election manifesto and hardly any unmodified.[38] Especially when the party is in power and the time has come for it to implement its policies, policy-oriented party members must compete with interest groups, government departments and perceived public opinion to have the leadership accommodate their demands. In any event, the sovereignty of the policy committee in the party's policy-making process must be doubted. In one election year, 1960, the policy committee did not meet at all and the party's election policy was instead written by the Prime Minister, Nash, between the end of the Parliamentary session and the opening of the campaign.[39] It did not meet for more than two years between 1970 and 1972 and held very few meetings in 1975, another election year.[40]

Members of the hierarchy of the extra-parliamentary party have been left in no doubt as to the hegemony of the PLP over the rest of the party. Since 1935, according

38. The policy committee is responsible for drafting the party's election manifesto, which contains its official policy for the next three years. Up until this year it included an equal number of representatives (usually five each) from the PLP and the party's central executive. From 1976 onwards, it consists of "an equal number of representatives from the Annual Conference and the PLP, together with one representative of each of the Maori Policy Committee, the Labour Women's Council and the Youth Advisory Council". NZLP, Constitution and Rules, revised ed. (1975), p. 27.

39. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 391.

40. Hirschfeld, Interview; Ditchfield, Interview.

to one, there has been "an enormous shift of power"[41] within the party toward the MPs, who are happy to see the influence of both conference and the party's affiliated unions decline, so that they can formulate policy more exclusively with a view to electoral success. According to a member of the national executive for all three years that the third Labour Government was in office, the behaviour of the PLP during that period was "totally independent":[42] it completely ignored the views of other party organs, including those of the national council, which, according to the constitution, is the party's "governing body when the conference is not in session".[43] As a result, "stand-up fights"[44] occurred at council meetings between representatives of the PLP and other members. Another member of the executive during the same period has affirmed that the PLP was autonomous of the council, while the party's youth advisory council

41. Hirschfeld, Interview.

42. Ditchfield, Interview.

43. NZLP, Constitution and Rules, revised ed. (1975), p. 24. The national council was until 1974 the 'national executive' of the party. Required by the constitution to meet at least six times annually, it comprises fourteen regional representatives, two women's representatives, a youth representative, a Maori representative, a Pacific Islanders' representative, and all members of the new national executive. The latter, which was formerly the 'central executive', meets monthly - "or at more frequent intervals if required" - in lieu of the council. It includes the president of the party, the two vice-presidents, the general secretary and five other members, all of whom are elected by conference. Between the 1974 and 1975 conferences, the national council actually met on eight occasions and the national executive on six.

44. Ditchfield, Interview.

complained in 1974 that:

> The party has come to be dominated by its parliamentary wing, for the executive has sadly neglected its function of bringing parliamentarians to account.... The executive is derided by members of parliament for its weakness. Only when the executive is prepared to demand that the Parliamentary Labour Party implement Conference decisions can we say that the party organization has any function whatsoever.[45]

Trade union representation is now quite low in the PLP, but is still very high on the national council and (particularly) on the national executive, whose collective power is much less in reality than in the constitution. In 1973-74 and again in 1974-75, as an example, three out of eight members of the executive were trade union secretaries, two were MPs - one a former trade union president and the other 'of trade union persuasion' - and another was an office-holder in the largest union in the public service. On nine executive members in 1975-76, two were trade union secretaries, one was a trade union organizer, one again was from a public service union, and two were MPs of trade union origins or 'persuasion'. The strong trade union representation is attributable to two factors: (i) the executive is elected by annual conference on a card vote; and (ii) a large number of trade union secretaries, especially secretaries of national unions, reside and are employed in Wellington, which facilitates their attendance at the regular council and executive meetings.

45. NZLP, Report of the Fifty-eighth Annual Conference (1974), p. 87. The national executive to which the youth council refers is now, of course, the national coucil.

Even on these bodies, however, trade unionists and those 'of trade union persuasion' are not entirely dominant. The PLP has itself infiltrated the hierarchy of the extra-parliamentary party. Although the constitution explicitly provides only two seats for Parliamentarians on the national council, other MPs may become members by being elected by conference to posts as ordinary members of the executive or as party president or vice-president. Since 1950, when Roberts' thirteen-year term as president ended, six party presidents out of eight have been MPs, one of the exceptional two, Martyn Finlay, having served one term in the House before being elected to the presidency. Even before Roberts had become president in 1937, nine presidents out of fifteen had come from the PLP.[46] Three factors may account for the (successful) candidature of MPs for positions in the extra-parliamentary party: (i) the availability of time, because politics is their career and they can devote their full attention to it; (ii) the availability of free travel, which confers advantages on them that have not normally been enjoyed by other party office-holders; and (iii) generally greater individual competence, especially in the chairmanship of conference. It is noteworthy in this last respect that the last five leaders of the PLP - Fraser, Nash, Arnold Nordmeyer, Kirk and Rowling - were all previously presidents of the party.

The PLP has thus reinforced its hegemony over the

46. See Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 224.

rest of the party by infiltrating precisely those organs and positions in the extra-parliamentary party from which it is meant to be kept in check. But how has the increase in its power affected trade unions affiliated to the party? Given the manner in which the social composition of the PLP has changed since the party was founded, trade unionists should have been much more influential in the party in the period before World War II than they are now.

III. THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE LABOUR PARTY

(1) The Hegemony of the Trade Unionists

While the first Labour Government was in power, the leaders of the largest unions affiliated to the party undoubtedly co-operated with the leadership of the PLP in order to negate intra-party democracy. After the victory of 1935, caucus was split between, on the one hand, the leadership and Cabinet, which was overwhelmingly trade unionist in composition and enjoyed the support of the majority of affiliated unions, and, on the other, the 'left', which included a disproportionately high number of MPs who had been motivated in their support of the Labour Party by intellectual conviction rather than by working-class origins.[47] Although the caucus left fluctuated in size according to the issue at stake, seven-

47. Brown, "Labour Party", pp. 799-800. These MPs were 'left-wing' in the sense that they favoured socialization of the means of exchange and the use of public credit to finance recovery from the depression. They did not advocate socialization of the means of production.

teen MPs are reputed to have formed its 'hard core'.[48] One was a former housewife, one a former businessman, seven were former trade unionists and eight were former 'professionals' (a writer, John A Lee, whose origins, however, were distinctly proletarian; a barrister and solicitor; an engineering instructor; a doctor of medicine and four clergymen). The left thus contained a number of trade unionists fairly proportionate to their representation in the PLP (41 per cent, compared with 45 per cent), a disproportionately low number of businessmen and farmers (six per cent, compared with 23 per cent), but an extremely high number of professional people (47 per cent, compared with 26 per cent of the PLP's entire membership). On the other hand, ten of the thirteen members of Cabinet, against which the left was battling to try to restore caucus control of the PLP, originated from the trade union movement (see Tables 12 and 14).

The power struggle between Cabinet and caucus reached a climax at the 1940 conference, at which Lee was expelled from the party. Many more trade union than branch votes were cast for Lee's expulsion. Shortly before his fate was debated, conference, by adopting the report of the national executive, radically altered the distribution of power at conference, enabling affiliated unions to cast a number of votes fully proportionate to their membership

48. B S Taylor, "The Expulsion of J A Lee and Its Effects on the Development of the NZLP" (MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1970), p. 7.

so long as they were represented by at least four delegates.[49] Not all the represented trade unions voted for Lee's expulsion, but all the large ones, such as the New Zealand Workers' Union (with fifty-seven votes, twice as many as in 1939), the Hotel Workers' Federation (thirty-nine votes) and the NZWWF, did. Lee himself is convinced that the union delegates carried out his political assassination on behalf of the party leadership. In his view, a majority of the delegates on the conference floor had supported him and union card votes had carried the motion expelling him by 546 votes to 344. In his political memoirs, he claimed:

> The branch members - the rank and file of the party - on the whole had been my supporters.
>
> Card votes of the New Zealand Workers' Union, the Waterfront Federation, the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Federation, the Seamen's and Miners' unions and the Clerical Workers' Union, the votes of many unconsulted memberships, settled my political life.[50]

Support for Lee's allegation is plentiful. In a letter of resignation from the party, the speaker and MP for Napier, William Barnard, told Prime Minister Fraser that he viewed with alarm the "growing political domination of some five or six powerful industrial chiefs"[51] with whom Fraser and Cabinet had formed a close alliance.

49. See Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, pp. 210-11.

50. Lee, Simple on a Soapbox, p. 197.

51. Quoted in Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, pp. 209-10. Taylor, "The Expulsion of J A Lee", p. 36, suggests that Lee's expulsion was actually planned by Fraser; the general secretary of the party, David Wilson; the president of the Seamen's Union, Walsh; and the Hotel Workers' Federation leader, Frederick Young.

A Labour Party historian believes that the votes of the major affiliated unions had, in the end, proved decisive in securing Lee's expulsion,[52] and a student of the 'Lee Affair' and its consequences argues similarly that:

> Though the vote on the expulsion motion was not a simple union versus branch confrontation, the decisive factor was probably the weight of votes cast by the big unions, whose leaders were closely allied with the political leadership of the Labour Party. The alliance between the ruling circle and the union leadership had proved crucial.[53]

Elsewhere it has been argued that, although the full card vote was introduced on the initiative of the party leadership in order to facilitate Lee's expulsion, the effect of the voting behaviour of the union delegates was to turn a narrow margin in favour of Lee's expulsion into "a very clear-cut one".[54] Whichever version is the most accurate, the actual circumstances of Lee's expulsion and the means by which it was carried out were rather less important than its consequences, which were profound. The party's branch membership fell by nearly 31 per cent from 51,174 in 1940 to 35,481 in 1941. Although this was due as much, if not more, to the mobilization for World War II as to the expulsion of Lee, the cost of the latter in terms of alienated active party members was still great. To many of these members - the committed socialists, who constituted a large part of the party's backbone in the electorates - the expulsion of Lee was the "last straw"[55] ending any hopes that they may still have held that the party leadership would uphold intra-party democracy and

52. Brown, The Rise of New Zealand Labour, p. 211.

53. Taylor, "The Expulsion of J A Lee", p. 28.

54. Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 338.

55. Taylor, "The Expulsion of J A Lee", pp. 49-50.

fully implement the policies for which the party had been given a mandate in both 1935 and 1938. The branch membership of the Labour Party has never recovered what it lost either in numbers or in intellectual activity between 1940 and 1941 (see Table 1).

The end result of this sudden and sharp decline in branch membership and the introduction of a full card vote at conference was that the hegemonic position of the few union and party leaders was consolidated. Despite the enactment of compulsory unionism in 1936, affiliated membership of the Labour Party had increased no more rapidly than branch membership between 1935 and 1940. As branch membership declined in 1940, however, affiliated membership actually rose slightly from 185,431 to 190,405, by which stage 97 per cent of the unionists affiliated to the FOL and 75 per cent of those registered under the IC & A Act were also members of the party (see Table 2). No union appears to have disaffiliated from the party as a protest against Lee's expulsion, although a few, including the Wellington branch of the NZWWF and the Auckland Drivers' and Canterbury Freezing Workers' unions, expressed support for Lee and opposition to the methods employed to expel him.[56] The only prominent trade unionist to resign from the party was Norman Douglas, who was then secretary of the Auckland Trades Council.[57]

As well as having debilitating consequences for the Labour Party, the expulsion of Lee, more than any other

56. Ibid., pp. 86-87.

57. Douglas, Interview.

single event, signified the emergence in the labour movement of an oligarchy comprising a few political leaders, notably Fraser and Wilson, who was later elevated to Cabinet via the Legislative Council, and a few trade union leaders, including Walsh, Roberts, McLagan, Young and the secretary of the New Zealand Workers' Union, Richard Eddy.[58] Thus, in the 1930's and 1940's, trade unions were accomplices in the oligarchical leadership of the party. Oligarchy disadvantaged the party professionals - the 'intellectuals' such as Lee.

(2) The Hegemony of the 'Intellectuals'

By 1975, however, the distribution of power among the various social groups within the Labour Party had undergone a remarkable transformation. As we saw in the first chapter, former professional employees have now eclipsed former manual workers and trade union secretaries as the most powerful group within the PLP. Between 1935 and 1975, the proportion of Labour Party MPs in the former category increased from 21 to 31 per cent, while those in the latter category declined from 45 to 31 per cent (see Table 12). Over the same period, the proportion of trade unionists among those MPs occupying the party's thirty safest seats fell by over 50 per cent (see Table 13). In Cabinet, ten ministers between 1935 and 1940 had trade union backgrounds and only one had been professionally employed. In the third Labour Government, on the other hand, the former professionals in Cabinet outnumbered those whose origins were in the

58. Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 156.

trade union movement (see Table 14). Moreover, in the 'higher circles' of Cabinet, the professionals were completely dominant. After the death of Prime Minister Kirk, the top Cabinet committee, the Policy and Priorities Committee, did not contain a single minister with a trade union background (see Table 25).

TABLE 25

POLICY AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE OF CABINET, 1975

Member	Occupation
W E Rowling	School teacher and lecturer.
R J Tizard	School teacher and lecturer.
W W Freer	Journalist and company secretary.
A M Finlay	Barrister and solicitor.
A J Faulkner	Sales clerk and credit manager.
C J Moyle	School teacher and farmer.
J A Walding	Businessman.

This transformation assumes even greater significance when we recall that the PLP is now rather more dominant over the extra-parliamentary party than it was while the first Labour Government was in office. In any event, the ability of affiliated trade unions to exercise influence over the proceedings of the party's annual conference was probably less between 1972 and 1975 than it had been in any other period in the party's history. There is thus a sound basis in fact for the trade union assertion that the third Labour Government, particularly after the death of Kirk, was dominated by 'intellectuals'.[59]

59. The label 'intellectual', however, is undeserved and if anything, flatters the party leaders. See Ovenden, "On the Absence of Political Ideas", pp. 192-94.

Just as fewer former manual workers and trade union administrators have been recruited into the PLP and the party leadership, so, too, has the manual working-class element in the party's branch membership seemed to diminish. Some tentative evidence of the gradual withdrawal of the manual working-class from participation in the Labour Party is presented in Table 26. Whereas the party's overall branch membership declined between 1940 and 1975 by about 72 per cent (from 51,174 to 14,247; see Table 1), total membership of some twenty-five selected branches in predominantly working-class electorates or districts fell by more than 78 per cent. The Grey Lynn, Otahuhu, Napier, Westport and Port Chalmers branches - all of them in undoubtedly working-class districts and among the biggest in the party in 1940 - recorded membership decreases over the period ranging from 87 to 94 per cent, far in excess of the average decline. The expulsion of Lee (who was from Grey Lynn), the divisive issue of conscription (which records reveal may have cost the party more than 11,000 members) in 1949, the disappointing performance of the second Labour Government - these factors and others, such as the eradication of visible poverty and fading memories of the depression, seem to have taken their toll of the Labour Party's working-class branch membership. In these areas, the party has evidently failed to renew itself.

The impression thus gained that the composition of the Labour Party's branch membership has become less and less working-class and probably more and more middle-class is strengthened by Table 27, which reveals that a far

TABLE 26

MEMBERSHIP OF SELECTED LABOUR PARTY BRANCHES IN WORKING-CLASS ELECTORATES, 1930-75

Branch	1930	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1959	1965	1970	1975
Auckland Central	18	18	135	62	50	58	55	52	75	58
Grey Lynn	200	53	509	145	120	106	85	58	67	32
Grey Lynn West	-	-	-	-	-	141	-	41	-	-
Onehunga	-	12	400	108	211	-	-	-	-	-
Onehunga Central	-	-	-	-	-	185	156	158	88	148
Onehunga North	-	-	-	-	-	54	55	-	-	-
Otahuhu	116	17	276	50	190	195	55	-	-	-
Otahuhu West Mavona	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49	30	36
Napier	246	153	452	364	179	235	222	159	49	56
Wanganui	127	24	358	81	239	329	182	182	57	94
Wanganui East	31	2	116	71	110	75	57	64	39	44
Westport	69	131	504	231	276	33	60	217	135	46
Runanga	-	-	140	99	210	195	105	58	50	-
Greymouth	110	43	253	154	242	110	130	100	42	40

TABLE 26 - Continued

Branch	1930	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1959	1965	1970	1975
Hornby (-Islington)	-	10	33	15	61	190	288	10	35	38
Linwood	-	-	166	69	57	24	-	-	-	51
Lyttelton	11	62	286	213	162	209	224	412	294	155
Timaru	12	53	640	371	281	-	-	-	-	-
Timaru Central	-	-	-	-	-	75	125	208	138	130
Timaru North End	-	-	-	-	139	103	125	100	-	-
Timaru South	-	-	-	-	267	157	-	63	152	159
Dunedin Central	-	52	142	28	-	-	-	-	-	13
Dunedin North	32	64	222	-	58	51	57	20	10	-
Dunedin South	50	130	201	163	140	245	280	228	153	*
Port Chalmers	-	18	444	124	185	287	130	98	43	53
Total	1022	842	5327	2348	3177	3057	2391	2277	1457	1153

SOURCES: NZLP, Annex to the Annual Reports of the National Executive, 1930-1940. Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1945-75.

* Unfinancial.

greater proportion of the Labour Party's biggest branches are now to be found in seats that, after the 1972 election, were held marginally - as many by National as by Labour. If the classification were to be made on the basis of results of the 1975 election, none of the Labour Party's twenty biggest branches - with the possible exception of Porirua-Kapiti Samoan (twentieth equal) - would be located in a safe Labour seat, of which there remained seven (excluding four Maori seats). The proportion of the party's policy-oriented branches that are located in working-class branches is possibly even smaller. As Table 28 indicates, almost 25 per cent of the remits considered by the annual conference in the period from 1971 to 1975 inclusive originated from branches which contained little more than one-thousandth of the party's total membership, branch and affiliated. More startling still, seven of the eight branches are in safe or marginal National seats - Karori (Wellington) and North Shore (Auckland), which are both safe, and Wellington Central, which is marginal. These branches are somewhat paradoxically among the most radical in the party - the party's left-wing conscience, once found in the working-class branches such as Grey Lynn, now appears to reside in branches which consist largely of young people - students, professionals, and academics.[60]

Above all else, this transformation of the Labour Party into a political organization with an overwhelmingly

60. Northey records that the changing composition of the Labour Party during the 1960's was reflected in a "much higher ratio of middle-income to low-income people among its activists and conference delegates". "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 241. Cf. Hindess, The Decline of Working-Class Politics, pp. 8-9.

TABLE 27

TWENTY LARGEST LABOUR PARTY BRANCHES, 1940 AND 1975

	1940				1975		
	Branch	Electorate	Members		Branch	Electorate[1]	Members
1.	Timaru	SL	640	1.	New Zealand Tongan	-	321
2.	Oamaru	ML	535	2.	Miramar	MN	214
3.	Grey Lynn	SL	509	3.	Mahora	ML	213
4.	Westport	SL	504	4.	Gisborne	ML	193
5.	Napier	SL	452	5.	Victoria University	MN	167
6.	Port Chalmers	SL	444	6.	Levin	MN	165
7.	Patea	N	422		New Zealand Samoan	-	165
8.	New Lynn	SL	413	8.	Hastings	ML	164
9.	Invercargill	SL	402		Waiheke Island	SL	164
10.	Onehunga	SL	400	10.	Timaru South	SL	159
11.	Masterton	ML	378	11.	Blockhouse Bay	SL	158
12.	Wanganui	SL	358	12.	Lyttelton	SL	155

TABLE 27 - Continued

	1940				1975		
	Branch	Electorate	Members		Branch	Electorate	Members
13.	Whangarei	ML	333		Maraenui	SL	155
14.	Birkenhead	SL	332	14.	Onehunga Central	SL	148
15.	Auckland East	SL	308	15.	Temuka	MN	147
16.	Balclutha	N	301	16.	Geraldine-Orari	MN	146
	Hamilton	ML	301	17.	Papanui	MN	144
18.	Lyttelton	SL	286	18.	Whangarei	ML	133
19.	New Plymouth	ML	285	19.	Golden Bay	ML	131
20.	Shannon	ML	284	20.	Porirua-Kapiti Samoan	SL	130
					Timaru Central	SL	130

SOURCES: NZLP, "Annex to the Annual Report of the National Executive," 1940; "Delegates Attending 1975 Annual Conference," 1975.

TABLE 27 - Continued

[1] Electorates in which branches were situated have been classified according to the results of the 1938 and 1972 general elections respectively: SL safe Labour (i.e., would fall only if swing against party exceeded 7%); ML marginal Labour (i.e., vulnerable to swing against party of up to and including 7%); SN safe National; MN marginal National. Swing has been calculated on basis of majority as proportion of total vote in electorate.

TABLE 28

CONFERENCE REMITS FROM SELECTED LABOUR PARTY BRANCHES, 1971-75

Branch	Electorate	[1] Members	Remits					
		1975	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	Total
Farm Road	SN	15	54	88	35	25	57	259
Karori	SN	10	-	10	20	13	13	56
Karori Electorate	SN	36	-	-	32	-	24	56
North Shore Youth	SN	14	-	-	27	-	18	45
Princes Street	SL	70	12	39	47	39	42	179
Tamaki Youth	SN	13	-	-	-	-	52	52
The Terrace	MN	36	18	29	30	26	49	152
Thorndon	MN	24	-	-	-	2	34	36
Total		218	84	166	191	105	289	835
% of all members		0.11						
% of all remits			17.0	33.4	23.3	15.6	30.6	24.3

SOURCES: NZLP, Annual Conference Remit Papers, 1971-75; "Delegates Attending 1975 Annual Conference," 1975.

[1] See note to Table 27.

'professional', middle-class leadership and a predominantly middle-class active branch membership has sown the seeds of discord which began to germinate, but barely surfaced publicly, while the third Labour Government was in power. The immediate cause of the discord was not any disagreement over the party's basic orientation, which remained essentially pragmatic and, in that sense, in the trade unionist tradition, but rather an absence of liaison between a very dominant PLP and a very subordinate extra-parliamentary party. According to a trade union secretary in the hierarchy of the extra-parliamentary party, the PLP did not seek the advice of affiliated trade unions on any of the industrial relations legislation that it enacted, not even on that which affected the vital interests of unions.[61] Not only the party's national council, but also the industrial relations sub-committee of the executive, the Joint Council of Labour and the policy committee were ignored on industrial relations issues as the PLP "went off on its own tack".[62] The party's industrial relations policy was the last section to be prepared for inclusion in its manifesto before the 1975 election. It was devised and written solely by the Minister of Labour, Arthur Faulkner, who consulted neither the JCL, the policy committee, the industrial relations sub-committee nor - probably - the FOL over its contents.[63]

61. Ditchfield, Interview. However, this does not exclude the possibility that there was regular consultation with the FOL leadership.

62. Ditchfield, Interview.

63. Ditchfield, Interview; Rodger, Interview. The Auckland Star reported on December 3, 1975 that FOL president, Skinner, saw the manifesto only after it had been printed and he had requested a copy.

Thus, the only time that most trade union leaders saw any members of the PLP was before the 1975 election, when they were visited by delegations of Parliamentarians requesting financial contributions for the party's campaign fund. The fact that some Cabinet ministers "just did not want to know" them, but still wanted "our money and our weight"[64] angered trade unionists. Hence the disagreements between Parliamentarians and trade unionists at meetings of the national council and the trade unionists' determination to defeat what they perceived to be attempts by the PLP to diminish their influence within the party.

As the PLP has become increasingly dominant over the rest of the party, it has itself become dominated more and more by its middle-class members, by the professionals, or 'intellectuals' whom the trade unionists in the party distrust. This, in essence, is the history of the development of the Labour Party since the end of World War II, and is also one of the reasons why the party has retained the allegiance of fewer and fewer trade unions.[65] For, apart from the fact that full employment has made them feel stronger and able to be more self-reliant and the additional fact that they found it increasingly advantageous to emulate the characteristically non-partisan stance of most other interest groups, trade unionists have seen control of the Labour Party slip into the hands of MPs whom they tend to regard as aliens.

64. Ditchfield, Interview.

65. Ditchfield, Interview.

The behaviour of the second as well as the third Labour Government reinforced the leaders of affiliated trade unions in this attitude. There was little in the legislative output of either administration to enthuse trade unionists.[66] As an example, the president of the Auckland Boilermakers' Union, the most policy-oriented of all the unions affiliated to the party, cited the Annual Holidays Amendment Act, which extended the minimum annual leave for employees from two to three weeks, as the only significant legislative advance achieved for the trade union movement by the third Labour Government.[67] Very little consultation took place between the trade unions and the second Labour Government, which knew that whether they were consulted or not, the unions would neither welcome nor readily accept the measures that it envisaged implementing - as in the 'Black Budget'. The PLP, in any case, was anxious to assert its independence from the industrial wing of the movement.[68]

Both Nash, in his term as party leader from 1950 to 1963, and Nordmeyer, his successor, tried to turn the Labour Party into a national, as opposed to a class, party.[69]

66. On the industrial relations record of the third Labour Government, see Don J Turkington, "Industrial Relations", in Labour in Power, pp. 50-60.

67. Finlay, Interview.

68. Hirschfeld, Interview.

69. Barry Gustafson, Interview, Auckland, December 5, 1975.

The philosophy of Nordmeyer, who was architect of the party's controversial 'new look', was that New Zealand society was classless, or else entirely middle-class, and that there was therefore "no place today for what used to be known as the class struggle".[70] In 1965, however, he was ousted from the leadership by Kirk, who, as the candidate of a trade union 'group in the PLP, is said to have had the support of the trade union movement in his bid.[71] The following year Norman Douglas was elected president of the party and, with Kirk and Douglas at the helm, the party set out to secure the re-affiliation of some of the unions that Nash and Nordmeyer had alienated (see years 1965 to 1970 in Table 2).

Kirk and Douglas actually achieved their major success in 1965, when, with the party secretary, Alan McDonald, they addressed the biennial conference of the Hotel Workers' Union and persuaded it to resume an active role within the party after it had not paid affiliation fees for five years.[72] By 1971, however, the historical trend toward union withdrawal from the party was beginning to re-assert itself. Douglas had been succeeded as party president in 1970 by future Prime Minister, Wallace Rowling, whose elevation in the hierarchy of the extra-parliamentary party had been delayed for some three years by a lack of trade

70. Quoted in Roth, Trade Unions in New Zealand: Past and Present, p. 157.

71. Gustafson, Interview.

72. Douglas, Interview; NZLP, Report of the Forty-ninth Annual Conference (1965), p. 8. The union effectively disaffiliated itself from the party as a response to provisions of the 'Black Budget' which it believed would reduce employment opportunities in hotels and restaurants.

union support for his candidature at conference.[73] Meanwhile, having led the party unsuccessfully at two elections, in 1966 and 1969, Kirk was anxious to put as much distance as possible between the party and unpopular trade unions. In 1971, the New Zealand Seamen's Union disaffiliated from the party because of the PLP's attitude toward the punitive Shipping and Seamen's Amendment Bill proposed by the National Government and toward the deregistration of the union for its resistance to the bill's enactment and implementation. The disaffiliation of a union which had been one of the first to join the party - in 1919 - signified how the party had been totally transformed from its origins.

73. In three successive vice-presidential elections, Rowling is alleged to have gained the votes of about three-quarters of the branch delegates, while most of the big affiliated unions cast block votes for a former trade union president in the PLP, Henry May. See Northey, "The Annual Conferences of the NZLP", p. 333.

CONCLUSION

THE DEATH OF A WORKING-CLASS PARTY

The wheel has thus turned a full circle in sixty years. Trade unions are now dominated, rather than dominant, in the Labour Party, although they have, in the main, acquiesced in their domination. Whatever the indicator, trade union involvement in the party has fallen away sharply in the period since World War II. In 1975, in percentage terms, less than half as many trade unionists were affiliated to the Labour Party as well as to the FOL as in 1941; less than half as many trade unions were affiliated to the party as in 1941; barely a third as many annual conference delegates were trade unionists as in 1945; less than a third as many members of the PLP were former manual workers and trade union officials as in 1919; and just under half as many members of the Labour Cabinet were former trade unionists as in 1935. Trade unionists were completely dominant in the leadership of the first Labour Government - but non-existent on the most important Cabinet committee in the third. The Joint Council of Labour met on twenty-two occasions between 1952 and 1957 - but only twice between 1970 and 1975. In so many ways, the Labour Party in 1975 was very much less the party of the organized working class - and very much more the party of the salaried middle class - than it had been at the beginning of

World War II.

The overall tendency has clearly been for trade unions to opt out, rather than be pushed out, of the Labour Party. Their declining interest in participation in the party has manifested itself in the declining proportion of conference remits that they originate, in their general support for the status quo at conference, in the declining number of prominent trade unionists seeking to advance union interests in Parliament, and in the FOL leadership's preparedness to let the Joint Council become obsolete - to cite only some examples.

The growing political indifference of the trade unions could also be inferred from the decline in the value of their financial allocations to the Labour Party. The annual capitation fee paid by affiliated trade unionists to the party was increased from 3d in 1916 to 1/6d in 1942, but then remained unchanged until 1974, when it was raised from fifteen to twenty cents on a conference card vote in which some union delegates opposed the increase. For their fees to have retained the same value as they had had in 1942, affiliated unionists would each have had to contribute 54 cents, instead of 15 cents, to the party in 1973. Although trade unions reputedly still provide the Labour Party with its "solid basis of financial support"[1] (which may account for its apparent poverty), the party is much less reliant on the unions for funds to fight elections than was the case in the inter-war years. In the 1930's, unions provided the party with "the bulk"[2]

1. Isbey, Interview.

2. Bentley, "Trade Union Financial Assistance to the NZLP", p. 5.

of its election campaign funds. In its report in 1939, the party's national executive acknowledged "the immense value"[3] of trade union contributions to the party's 1938 campaign fund. The NZWWU that year contributed £1,500, the New Zealand Workers' Union £2,809, the Hotel Workers' Federation £2,500, and the ASRS £1,000.[4] In 1969, however, affiliated trade unions and the FOL together gave only $3,000 to the Labour Party's election campaign fund - less than was given by a single insurance company.[5] Just as the two major political parties have come to look much more alike in their policies and Parliamentary personnel, so have their financial backers. General elections in New Zealand today are funded almost totally by business.[6]

The withdrawal of the trade unions from participation in the Labour Party has resulted from the coincidence of a characteristic specifically of the economy of post-war New Zealand and three powerful, on-going and mutually reinforcing historical processes: the transformation of the trade union movement itself (brought about not only by technological and economic change, but also by a legislative measure, compulsory unionism); the evolution of the FOL into an increasingly independent and effective interest group, tending to the interests of trade unionists regardless of which party is in power; and the growing domination of an increasingly autonomous PLP by its professional, middle-class members. Although we cannot rank

3. Quoted ibid., p. 20.
4. Ibid.
5. Gustafson, Interview.
6. Gustafson, Interview.

them in order of explanatory power or state categorically that they alone account for the phenomenon we have attempted to explain, these three processes have all contributed to the decline in trade union participation in the Labour Party. So, too, has the success with which the unions have been able to pursue economistic objectives under full employment, which has prevailed for virtually the entire post-war period.

The narrow scope of the unions' objectives - their almost exclusive preoccupation with economism - must occupy a central position in any explanation of their declining interest in the Labour Party. What the unions have achieved is in itself much less important than what they have achieved in relation to what they have sought. It is as if the trade unionist, as Mann argues, "takes what he can easily get and attempts to reduce the salience of what is denied him".[7] Economistic objectives have been fairly easily attained by industrial action, but what would have happened if, for historical and sociological reasons, New Zealand unions had focused their attention on more wide-ranging issues of, say, workers' control and public ownership of industry? Could industrial action have realized objectives of this nature? Since they would have challenged capitalism itself, the answer is an unequivocal 'no'. The decline in trade union involvement in the Labour Party, of which full employment has been a major cause, rests ultimately, therefore, on the trade unions' (implicit) recognition of the legitimacy of the capitalist

7. Mann, Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, p. 32.

structure of industry, on the acceptance by the organized working class of the so-called 'ideology of hegemonic capitalism'.

There is widespread approval among trade unionists in at least one capitalist society, Britain, for the separation of industrial and political action that the ideology of hegemonic capitalism demands. Fully 48 per cent of all the respondents who were trade union members in one survey disapproved of the relationship which existed between trade unions and the British Labour Party and said that they should be kept separate.[8] In another, 67 per cent of the working-class respondents whose ideological orientations were 'radical' and a much higher proportion of those with other orientations agreed with the notion that trade unions "should stay out of politics and just try to improve pay and conditions".[9] In the United States and Britain at least, the trade union is viewed by the great majority of industrial workers as a means of "improving their standard of living, and not as an agency for transforming the social structure, or even as a way to greater worker participation in the affairs of the

8. Goldthorpe et al., The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behaviour, p. 28.

9. Bob Jessop, Traditionalism, Conservatism and British Political Culture (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974), p. 219. The more widespread disapproval of the union-party relationship among Jessop's than among Goldthorpe et al's respondents is probably attributable partly to the fact that the 'affluent' workers in the latter survey were all employed in large factories, whose work routines tend to intensify class consciousness. For a critique of the research design of the 'Affluent Worker' studies, see Ivor Crewe, "The Politics of 'Affluent' and 'Traditional' Workers in Britain: An Aggregate Data Analysis", British Journal of Political Science 3 (January 1973): 29-52.

enterprise".[10]

Since the ideology of hegemonic capitalism also tends to be antagonistic toward trade unionism itself, there is some evidence that it is even more deeply ingrained in the New Zealand political culture than in those of Britain and the United States. In a nation-wide survey in New Zealand in 1975, only 8.8 per cent of 2,000 respondents expressed 'full trust and confidence' in trade unions, half as many as had a similar attitude toward manufacturers and a quarter as many as had a similar attitude toward employers.[11] Even in the United States, where the hegemony of capitalism is normally considered to be most advanced, trade unions enjoyed the trust and confidence of 23 per cent of the respondents in a similar poll. Of the fact that the ideology of hegemonic capitalism has tightened its grip in post-war New Zealand, there can be no doubt. The organized working class in this country has never been so 'unconscious' of alternative social structures (to the capitalist structure which exists) as it is today.

If the processes which have split the trade unions off from the Labour Party continue to operate, then we must expect trade union involvement in the party further to decline. But there are alternative paths of development. Firstly, a determined and protracted effort by a National Government fully to exploit the anti-trade union strand in the hegemonic ideology could well revive trade union interest in the party. The anti-union rhetoric of the

11. Christchurch Star, June 13, 1975.

National Party while it was in opposition from 1972 to 1975 was certainly a major factor influencing the FOL's decision to back the Labour Party "to the hilt"[12] in the 1975 election. However, with important exceptions, as in 1951, the National Party in office is a different proposition to the National Party in opposition. The former usually chooses not to alienate the trade union movement, but rather to integrate the FOL into the decision-making process, where it can be implicated in policy formulation and, hopefully, manipulated in order to minimize costly industrial conflict. In any event, the threat of the enactment of punitive industrial relations legislation by a National Government did not suddenly jolt the trade unions out of their political somnolence in 1975. With the possible exception of one solitary union, the trade unionists who campaigned for the party did so as individuals in their respective electorates.[13] Moreover, the last time that trade unions clashed with a National Government in virtual industrial war, the Labour Party's response to the disunity of organized labour which characterized it caused not an increase, but rather a very sudden and very substantial decrease in union involvement in the party.

A second alternative is that the material prosperity that has helped sustain trade union economism in the post-war period may break down, in which eventuality demands would doubtless be heard for greater social control of

12. Ibid., September 26, 1975.

13. Wybrow, Interview. According to Norman Douglas, the Engineers' Union actually campaigned as a union for Labour's re-election.

the economy - as Mann suggests would be the case in capitalist societies generally.[14] This happened in New Zealand, of course, in the 1930's. A recurrence of material poverty is also likely to be accompanied by a recurrence of high-level unemployment and trade union industrial weakness, which would almost certainly rekindle the unions' interest in political action and the Labour Party. But would the Labour party again represent the political interests of trade unions as effectively as it did in the 1930's?

The answer, very likely, is that it would not. The content of the hegemonic ideology (unless its hegemony were to collapse along with material prosperity) requires the Labour Party to dissociate itself from the trade unions if it is to maximize its prospects of electoral success. In the case of the Seamen's Union, for example, the Labour Party indicated its preference for maximizing (middle-class) votes above maximizing its support in the trade union movement. The Labour Party could not say in the 1970's, as it did in the 1930's, that it had "never failed the industrial movement", that it had supported the trade unions "in every crisis that had arisen in the Dominion".[15]

Quite apart from the constraints imposed by the pursuit of electoral success, however, the transformed social composition of the PLP, in which power in the

14. Mann, Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, p. 70.

15. Walter Nash, in NZLP, Report of the Fourteenth Annual Conference (1930), p. 10.

Labour Party is effectively centralized, means that its members' innate predispositions toward trade unions are less benevolent than they once were. In the trade unions' absence, other social groups have converged upon the Labour Party and turned it into their political vehicle. Former manual workers and trade union officials in the PLP barely outnumber businessmen and farmers now and are actually outnumbered by former professionals. There were isolated manifestations of trade union discontent with their waning influence vis-à-vis the party 'intellectuals' during the term of office of the third Labour Government and after its defeat. Notably, the controversy which raged for some months over candidate selection in the Dunedin North electorate developed after trade unionists had taken over the local LEC in order to ensure that another 'intellectual' was not recruited into the PLP. Equally notably, however, a trade unionist did not, in the end, win the party's nomination for the seat. Four days after the November 30 election, it was prophesied that trade unions would move "swiftly and powerfully to rebuild their diminished authority",[16] in the Labour Party in the wake of its defeat. Unidentified 'senior' and 'influential' trade unionists, believed, as did trade unionists generally, according to a unionist on the party's national executive, that the party had been 'white-anted' by its "airy-fairy intellectuals".[17] Furthermore, they believed that the time had come for the trade unions to do something about it.

16. Auckland Star, December 3, 1975

17. Ditchfield, Interview.

Given the strength of the middle-class groups in the PLP and the still great latent power of the unions at the party's annual conference and on the national executive, it is conceivable that, if a major intra-party 'class' conflict were to eventuate, it would originate in a concerted trade union attempt to restore intra-party democracy, which, in the last forty years, has been drastically eroded. But the unions could not reverse an historical process and undo what has been wrought over a period of thirty or more years. The odds in any such conflict would so heavily favour the middle-class groups now ascendant in the power structure of the party that, in its aftermath, the trend toward union withdrawal from participation in the party would likely accelerate. The party would then become still more middle-class and still less working-class.

Further substantial decline in either its affiliated or branch membership would be fatal for the Labour Party as a mass-membership political organization, for, in this sense, it was moribund in 1975. Controlling for population growth, the party's branch membership was only 15 per cent of what it was in 1940 (see Table 29). At about 2:100, the party's ratio of individual members to voters was about one-third of that of the British Labour Party, whose own ratio is by far the lowest for all the social-democratic parties in Europe.[18] So low was branch membership that the party's ability to organize

18. See Tom Forester, "Labour's Local Parties", New Society 33 (September 25, 1975): 695.

TABLE 29

THE DECLINE OF THE LABOUR PARTY AS A MASS PARTY, 1940-75

Year	Members	Labour Voters[1]	% Members	Total NZ Pop.[2]	% Members
		Branch Membership			
1940	51,174	513,397	9.97	1,633,645	3.13
1945	20,340	536,994	3.79	1,727,817	1.18
1950	38,155	506,100	7.54	1,927,629	1.98
1955	38,261	484,082	7.90	2,164,734	1.77
1959	30,052	508,179	5.91	2,359,746	1.27
1965	17,812	499,392	3.57	2,663,843	0.67
1970	13,384	592,035	2.26	2,852,137	0.47
1975	14,247	636,322	2.24	3,105,400	0.46
		Total Membership			
1940	236,605	513,397	46.09	1,633,645	14.48
1945	157,263	536,994	29.29	1,727,817	9.10
1950	213,068	506,100	42.10	1,927,629	11.05
1955	174,202	484,082	35.99	2,164,734	8.05
1959	172,925	508,179	34.03	2,359,746	7.33
1965	185,414	499,392	37.13	2,663,843	6.96
1970	203,274	592,035	34.30	2,852,137	7.12
1975	198,903	636,322	31.26	3,105,400	6.41

SOURCES: NZLP, Annex to the Annual Reports of the National Executive, 1940-45; Delegates Attending Annual Conferences, 1950-75. Thomas T. Mackie and Richard Rose, The International Almanac of Electoral History (London: Macmillan, 1974), pp. 296, 300. Department of Statistics, New Zealand: Population and Migration 1971-72 (Wellington: Government Printer, p. 16.

[1] At closest election.

[2] As at December 31, except 1975 (March 31).

its potential supporters for electoral purposes - the most important activity of a pragmatic party - was open to considerable doubt. The battle between the two major political parties seemed to be becoming increasingly unequal. As the Labour Party had been transforming from a mass into a cadre party, substituting funds from business for funds from organized labour and the support of social 'notables' for the efficient organization of the masses, the National Party was rapidly becoming a mass party.[19] With at least 170,000 individual members in 1975, the National Party's membership was more than twelve times as great as the Labour Party's branch membership and almost equalled Labour's branch and affiliated membership combined.[20] In the Canterbury-Westland region alone, the National Party had 37,000 individual members, two and a half times as many as the Labour Party had in the entire country.

If, as a mass party, the Labour Party was moribund in 1975, then, as the party of the working class, organized or otherwise, it was already dead. Having relinquished

19. On mass parties and cadre parties, see Duverger, Political Parties, pp. 63-71. Support for the Labour Party in the 1975 election campaign came from the social 'notables' who were the first 'Citizens for Rowling'.

20. Given the inactivity of the Labour Party's affiliated membership, the National Party's membership is better compared with Labour's branch, than total, membership. In the Auckland Boilermakers' Union, which is the most policy-oriented of all the party's affiliated unions, only about twelve of 600 members in Auckland City were active in the Labour Party in 1975. In other unions, therefore, the ratio of active to all affiliated members is probably lower.

or been dispossessed of the power that they had once exercised in the party, the trade unions had ceased to be active participants in its internal politics. The party's working-class branch membership appeared to have been almost totally wiped out. Though the possibility of its ultimate rebirth could not be excluded, working-class politics in New Zealand, at least as represented by the Labour Party, had simply expired.

APPENDIX

TABLE 30

OCCUPATIONAL ORIGINS OF MEMBERS OF THE PLP
BY SAFE AND MARGINAL SEATS, 1919-75

		TU			WCW			PS			PROF.			B-F			TOTAL		
ELECTION		M [1]	S [2]	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T
1919		4	3	7	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	8
		80.0	100.0	87.5	20.0	-	12.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62.5	37.5	100
1922	No.	10	4	14	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	12	5	17
	%	83.3	80.0	82.3	-	20.0	5.9	-	-	-	8.3	-	5.9	8.3	-	5.9	70.6	29.4	100
1925	No.	2	7	9	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	5	7	12
	%	40.0	100.0	75.0	20.0	-	8.3	-	-	-	20.0	-	8.3	20.0	-	8.3	41.7	58.3	100
1928	No.	7	7	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	1	1	2	11	8	19
	%	63.6	87.5	73.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	27.3	-	15.8	9.1	12.5	10.5	57.9	42.1	100
1931	No.	8	9	17	-	1	1	-	-	-	3	2	5	-	1	1	1	11	13
	%	72.7	69.2	70.7	-	7.7	4.2	-	-	-	27.3	15.4	20.8	-	7.7	4.2	45.8	54.2	100
1935	No.	6	18	24	-	1	1	-	-	-	5	6	11	14	3	17	25	28	53
	%	24.0	64.3	45.3	-	3.6	1.9	-	-	-	20.0	21.4	20.75	56.0	10.7	32.1	47.2	52.8	100

TABLE 30 - Continued

ELECTION		TU			WCW			PS			PROF.			B-F			TOTAL		
		M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T
1938	No.	3	20	23	-	2	2	-	-	-	3	11	14	7	6	13	14	39	53
	%	21.4	51.3	43.4	-	5.1	3.8	-	-	-	21.4	28.2	26.4	50.0	15.4	24.5	26.4	73.6	100
1943	No.	6	16	22	-	2	2	1	-	1	7	2	9	9	2	11	23	22	45
	%	26.1	72.7	48.9	-	9.1	4.4	4.3	-	2.2	30.4	9.1	20.0	39.1	9.1	24.4	51.1	48.9	100
1946	No.	6	15	21	-	2	2	-	2	2	5	3	8	7	2	9	18	24	42
	%	33.3	62.5	50.0	-	8.3	4.8	-	8.3	4.8	27.8	12.5	19.0	38.9	8.3	21.4	42.9	57.1	100
1949	No.	5	11	16	-	2	2	2	1	3	5	2	7	2	4	6	14	20	34
	%	35.7	55.0	47.1	-	10.0	5.9	14.3	5.0	8.8	35.7	10.0	20.6	14.3	20.0	17.6	41.2	58.8	100
1951	No.	5	7	12	-	3	3	1	1	2	4	3	7	3	3	6	13	17	30
	%	38.5	41.2	40.0	-	17.6	10.0	7.7	5.9	6.7	30.7	17.6	23.3	23.1	17.6	20.0	43.3	56.7	100
1954	No.	4	8	12	-	3	3	5	1	6	3	7	10	1	3	4	13	22	35
	%	30.8	36.4	34.3	-	13.6	8.6	38.5	4.5	17.1	23.1	31.8	28.6	7.7	13.6	11.4	37.1	62.9	100

TABLE 30 - Continued

ELECTION		TU			WCW			PS			PROF.			B-F			TOTAL		
		M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T	M	S	T
1957	No.	5	8	13	1	4	5	4	3	7	3	8	11	2	3	5	15	26	41
	%	33.3	30.8	31.7	6.7	15.4	12.2	26.7	11.5	17.1	20.0	30.8	26.8	13.3	11.5	12.2	36.6	63.4	100
1960	No.	7	8	15	1	2	3	3	1	4	3	5	8	1	3	4	15	19	34
	%	46.7	42.1	44.1	6.7	10.5	8.8	20.0	5.3	11.8	20.0	26.3	23.5	6.7	15.8	11.8	44.1	55.9	100
1963	No.	3	11	14	1	3	4	1	3	4	4	6	10	-	3	3	9	26	35
	%	33.3	42.3	40.0	11.1	11.5	11.4	11.1	11.5	11.4	44.4	23.1	28.6	-	11.5	8.6	25.7	74.3	100
1966	No.	6	10	16	2	1	3	-	2	2	2	8	10	1	3	4	11	24	35
	%	54.5	41.7	45.7	18.2	4.2	8.6	-	8.3	5.7	18.2	33.3	28.6	9.1	12.5	11.4	31.4	78.6	100
1969	No.	6	7	13	1	2	3	3	2	5	3	7	10	5	4	9	18	22	40
	%	33.3	31.8	32.5	5.6	9.1	7.5	16.7	9.1	12.5	16.7	31.8	25.0	27.8	18.2	22.5	45.0	55.0	100
1972	No.	4	11	15	2	3	5	2	4	6	6	11	17	6	6	12	20	35	55
	%	20.0	31.4	27.3	10.0	8.6	9.1	10.0	11.4	10.9	30.0	31.4	30.9	30.0	17.1	21.8	36.4	73.6	100
1975	No.	4	6	10	2	-	2	3	1	4	8	2	10	4	2	6	21	11	32
	%	19.0	54.5	31.25	9.5	-	6.25	14.3	9.1	12.5	38.1	18.2	31.25	19.0	18.2	18.75	65.6	34.4	100

SOURCES: Results of General Elections (Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1920-1970, H.33; 1972, E.9); Nigel S. Roberts, "The New Zealand General Election of 1972", in New Zealand Politics: A Reader, pp. 111-112; Who's Who in New Zealand, all eds.

[1] Marginal seats (i.e., seats vulnerable to swing against party of up to and including 7%, calculated on basis of majority as proportion of total vote).

[2] Safe seats (i.e., seats which would fall only if swing against party exceeded 7%).

[3] One MP, Mrs Catherine Stewart (Wellington West), who was a housewife, has not been categorized, but her seat has been included in the total.

TABLE 31

TRADE UNIONS AFFILIATED TO THE LABOUR PARTY, 1941: MEMBERSHIP AND CONFERENCE CARD VOTES AND DELEGATES

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Auckland Abattoir Assistants	1,264	4	-
New Plymouth Acid and Fertilisers	75	1	-
ASRS	13,000	27	9
Baking Trades:			
Auckland	560	3	1
Christchurch	290	2	-
Dunedin	174	1	1
Nelson	32	1	1
Wellington	426	2	2
Biscuit workers:			
Auckland	942	3	2
Christchurch	126	1	1
Dunedin	350	2	2
Nelson	50	1	1
Wellington	220	2	1
Boilermakers:			
Auckland	194	1	-
Wellington	100	1	-
Bootmakers:			
Auckland	400	2	-
Christchurch	450	2	2
Dunedin	201	2	1
Wellington	359	2	1
Brewery workers:			
New Zealand	764	3	2
Dunedin	202	2	1
Bricklayers:			
Auckland	137	1	1
Christchurch	60	1	-
Dunedin	54	1	-
Wellington	Unfinancial		

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Brick, Tile and Pottery:			
Auckland	700	3	2
Dunedin	140	1	-
Brush and Broom:			
Christchurch	64	1	-
Dunedin	30	1	1
Butchers:			
Auckland	Unfinancial		
Gisborne	30	1	1
Granity Brakesmen and Bricklayers	20	1	-
Dunedin Canister Workers	40	1	1
Caretakers:			
Auckland	430	2	-
Wellington	551	3	3
Auckland Caretakers & School Cleaners	30	1	-
Carpenters:			
Auckland	2,877	7	3
Blenheim	75	1	1
Christchurch	461	2	2
Dunedin	683	3	1
Gisborne	140	1	-
Hawkes Bay	335	2	-
Hutt	408	2	1
Nelson	146	1	-
Oamaru	75	1	-
Otahuhu	208	2	-
Palmerston North	346	2	-
Taranaki	170	1	-
Timaru	66	1	-
Wellington	1,345	4	2
Cement Workers:			
Dunedin	240	2	1
Portland	259	2	-
Chemical workers:			
Otahuhu	300	2	-
Wanganui	89	1	-

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Manufacturing and Chemists:			
Dunedin	80	1	1
Wellington Clerical Workers	4,892	11	7
Canterbury Clothing Trades	1,100	4	4
Coachworkers:			
Auckland	181	1	-
Dunedin	80	1	-
Nelson	11	1	-
Wellington	50	1	1
Grey Valley Colliery Workers	160	1	1
New Zealand Cooks and Stewards	950	4	4
Auckland Coopers	30	1	1
Wellington Cool Store Employees	75	1	-
Auckland Curriers	25	1	1
New Zealand Dairy Workers	2,675	7	2
Buller Deputies	22	1	-
Grey Valley Deputies & Underviewers	55	1	-
Drivers:			
Auckland	3,218	8	2
Blenheim	110	1	1
Canterbury	1,171	4	4
Gisborne	241	2	1
Hawkes Bay	522	3	1
Otago	699	3	1
Taranaki	344	2	-
Wellington	1,501	5	4
Westland	186	1	-
Electrical Workers:			
Auckland	1,185	4	4
Dunedin (wire)	80	1	1
Dunedin (line)	126	1	-
Taranaki	147	1	-
Wellington	870	3	-

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Engineers:			
New Zealand	5,260	12	6
Westland	135	1	-
Northern	2,597	7	1
Ohinemuri	60	1	-
New Zealand Engine Drivers	837	3	3
Auckland Fellmongers	226	2	1
Dunedin Felt Hatters	32	1	-
Auckland Female Printing	201	2	1
Fire Brigades:			
Auckland	55	1	1
Christchurch	50	1	-
Dunedin	51	1	1
Wellington	60	1	1
Fish Workers:			
Wellington	25	1	1
Manawatu Flax Workers	210	2	2
Flour Mill Employees:			
Auckland	100	1	-
Christchurch	117	1	-
Dunedin	30	1	-
Timaru	Unfinancial		
Oamaru	33	1	-
Freezing Workers:			
Canterbury	2,000	5	2
Gisborne	280	2	-
Moerewa	198	1	1
Nelson	30	1	-
Otago & Southland	1,540	5	1
Picton	90	1	-
Taranaki	351	2	2
Wellington	3,075	8	8
Fruit Canning:			
Auckland	272	2	1
Nelson	97	1	-

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Furniture Workers:			
Auckland	941	3	1
Canterbury	350	2	1
Dunedin	238	2	2
Invercargill	100	1	-
Wellington	678	3	2
Westland	11	1	-
Christchurch Gardeners	120	1	1
New Zealand Gas Workers	651	3	3
Auckland Glass Workers	160	1	1
Gold Dredge Workers:			
Colac Bay	Unfinancial		
Nelson	15	1	-
Otago	185	1	-
Westland	301	2	-
Grocers:			
Gisborne	251	2	1
North Canterbury	460	2	-
Camaru	40	1	-
Hairdressers:			
Auckland	212	2	-
Christchurch	110	1	1
Otago & Southland	53	1	-
New Zealand Harbour Board Employees	1,689	5	4
Hotel Workers:			
Auckland	5,140	12	4
Christchurch	2,114	6	2
Taranaki	450	2	1
Wellington	4,733	11	4
Otago	1,256	4	1
Westland	480	2	1
Southland	455	2	1
Nelson	200	1	1
Marlborough	145	1	1

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Iron and Brass Moulders:			
Auckland	Unfinancial		
Christchurch	148	1	-
Dunedin	175	1	-
Jewellers:			
Auckland	46	1	1
Dunedin	20	1	-
Wellington	52	1	1
Labourers:			
Auckland General	Unfinancial		
Auckland Local Body	1,804	5	3
Christchurch	2,601	7	5
Dunedin	1,484	4	4
Oamaru	210	2	1
Poverty Bay	Unfinancial		
Taranaki			
Wanganui Municipal	135	1	-
Wellington	3,700	9	2
Laundry Workers:			
Auckland	450	2	-
Dunedin	51	1	1
Timaru	40	1	-
Wellington	400	2	2
Matchworkers:			
Wellington	60	1	1
Metalworkers:			
Dunedin	240	2	1
Wellington	Unfinancial		
Milkroundsmen Auckland	250	2	1
Miners:			
Blackball	50	1	-
Brunner	100	1	-
Denniston	340	2	1
Inangahua	290	2	-
Millerton	100	1	-

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Miners: (Continued)			
Ngakawau	220	2	-
Nightcaps	340	2	1
Northern	1,000	3	2
Ohinemuri Mines & Batteries	472	2	1
Otago	232	2	1
Pakemiro	Unfinancial		
Puponga	8	1	-
Roa	66	1	-
Seddonville	10	1	-
State	400	2	1
Thames	141	1	-
Motion Picture Proj. Dunedin	30	1	-
Municipal Clerical Workers Dunedin	189	1	-
Musicians N.Z.	1,065	3	2
Oyster Trades, Bluff	81	1	1
Paint & Varnish, Auckland	35	1	-
Painters:			
Auckland	539	3	1
Christchurch	365	2	1
Dunedin	182	1	1
Napier	86	1	-
Wellington	420	2	2
Plasterers:			
Auckland	350	2	1
Dunedin	80	1	1
N.Z. Plumbers & Gasfitters	1,409	4	4

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Pressers, Dunedin	130	1	-
N.Z. Printing Trades	1,815	5	4
Dunedin Printing Trades	339	2	1
N.Z. Railway Tradesmen	2,128	6	2
Green I. Rolling Mills Emps.	20	1	-
Rope Workers:			
Christchurch	31	1	-
Dunedin	30	1	-
Auckland Roof Tilers	72	1	-
Auckland Rubber Workers	138	1	-
Saddlers:			
Auckland	139	1	1
Christchurch	90	1	1
Seamen:			
Auckland	900	3	-
Dunedin	520	3	1
Wellington	1,139	4	2
Ships Tally Clerks:			
Lyttelton	59	1	-
Wellington	76	1	1
Shipwrights:			
Dunedin	19	1	-
Auckland	122	1	-
Wellington	54	1	1
Shop Assistants:			
Blenheim	165	1	1
Dunedin	Unfinancial		

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Shop Assistants: (Continued)			
Gisborne	Unfinancial		
Christchurch	1,600	5	2
Wellington	Unfinancial		
Steam Ferry Emps. Auckland (Devon)	108	1	1
Auckland Stevedores	59	1	1
Stonemasons:			
Auckland	130	1	-
Christchurch	39	1	1
Wellington	Unfinancial		
Storemen & Packers:			
Auckland	1,488	4	2
Christchurch	763	3	2
Napier	254	2	-
Nelson	40	1	-
Otago	620	3	2
Birkenhead Sugarworkers	219	2	1
Dunedin Tailoresses	250	2	1
Auckland Tallymen	152	1	-
Theatrical Workers:			
Dunedin	80	1	1
Wellington	939	3	1
N.Z. Timberworkers	7,210	16	4
Wellington Trade Union Secs.	37	1	1
Tramwaymen:			
Auckland	1,035	4	1
Christchurch	308	2	2
Invercargill	47	1	-
Dunedin	260	2	2
Kaikorai Cable	30	1	-
New Plymouth	43	1	-
Wellington	845	3	2
Wanganui	46	1	-
Dunedin Tramway Officials	27	1	-
Auckland Transport Boards (Inspect.)	36	1	-
Auckland Transport Boards (Maintnce)	34	1	-
Raglan Underground Officials	62	1	-

TABLE 31 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Ohai Underviewers	21	1	-
United Warehousemen, Wellington	1,424	4	4
N.Z. Waterside Workers	6,203	14	6
Timaru Waterside Tally Clerks	12	1	-
Woollen Mills Employees:			
Canterbury	365	2	-
Otago & Southland	892	3	-
Wellington	920	3	2
N.Z. Workers	28,000	57	8
TOTAL	190,405		

SOURCE: NZLP, "Delegates Attending 1941 Annual Conference", 1941.

TABLE 32

TRADE UNIONS AFFILIATED TO THE LABOUR PARTY, 1958: MEMBERSHIP AND CONFERENCE CARD VOTES AND DELEGATES

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
ASRS	14,600	31	8
Auckland Asbestos Workers	81	1	-
Baking Trades: Dunedin	186	1	-
Biscuit Workers:			
Auckland	533	3	-
Dunedin	461	2	-
Nelso n	70	1	1
Boilermakers:			
Auckland	611	3	2
Dunedin	98	1	-
Bootmakers:			
Canterbury	835	3	3
Dunedin	240	2	-
Wellington	522	3	1
Brewery Workers:			
New Zealand	1,006	4	2
Dunedin	130	1	-
Dunedin Brick, Tile & Potters	170	1	-
Christchurch Bricklayers	80	1	-
Butchers:			
Gisborne	62	1	-
Nelson	71	1	1
Dunedin Canister Workers	50	1	-
Caretakers & Cleaners:			
Auckland	570	3	2
Wellington	400	2	1
Carpenters & Joiners:			
New Zealand	5,640	13	3
Dunedin	745	3	1
Auckland Chemical Workers	156	1	-
Dunedin Mfg Chemists	228	2	-

TABLE 32 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Clothing Trades:			
Canterbury	2,361	6	2
Otago	1,084	4	1
Wellington	4,202	10	2
Dunedin Coachworkers	114	1	-
Wellington Chief Stewards	13	1	1
Wellington Cool Store Workers	100	1	-
Cooks & Stewards:			
Auckland	225	2	1
Wellington	625	3	3
Auckland Coopers	36	1	-
Dunedin Corporation Inspectors	50	1	-
Auckland Cutters & Pressers	480	2	-
Wellington Dairy Workers	97	1	-
Deputies:			
Buller	60	1	-
Grey Valley	87	1	-
Ohai	28	1	-
Drivers:			
Canterbury	1,295	4	2
Nelson	50	1	-
Otago	1,037	4	-
Westland	240	2	-
Timaru	225	2	-
Blenheim	208	2	-
Dunedin Electrical Workers	310	2	-
N.Z. Engineers	19,376	40	5
Engine Drivers:			
Auckland	200	1	-
Christchurch	144	1	-
Dunedin	130	1	-
Westland	75	1	-
Ferry Co. Employees	148	1	1
Fire Brigades:			
Auckland	134	1	1
Dunedin	71	1	-

TABLE 32 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Flax Mills, Manawatu	200	1	1
Flour Mills:			
Auckland	100	1	-
Christchurch	100	1	-
Dunedin	60	1	-
Timaru	77	1	-
Oamaru	30	1	-
Freezing Workers:			
Canterbury	2,500	6	-
Gisborne	383	2	1
Burnside	201	2	-
McLeod Soap Works	35	1	-
Feilding	560	3	-
Patea	637	3	-
Tomoana	858	3	1
Longburn	417	2	-
Ngaruranga	443	2	2
Waingawa	462	2	-
Picton	156	1	-
Auckland Fruit Preserving	401	2	1
Dunedin Fur Trade	52	1	1
Gasworkers:			
Canterbury	164	1	-
Gisborne	27	1	-
Westland Gold Dredge	92	1	1
Grocers Assistants:			
Gisborne	451	2	1
Otago	158	1	-
Auckland Glassworkers	175	1	-
Otago Hairdressers	65	1	-
N.Z. Harbour Boards	1,880	5	3
Auckland Hatters	65	1	-
N.Z. Hotel Workers	20,568	43	3
Ice Cream Workers:			
Auckland	50	1	-
Wellington	108	1	1

TABLE 32 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Iron & Brass Moulders:			
Christchurch	118	1	-
Dunedin	164	1	-
Dunedin Jewellers	20	1	-
Labourers:			
Auckland	700	3	2
Poverty Bay	270	2	-
Wanganui	100	1	-
Wellington	2,472	6	4
Canterbury	2,108	6	3
Dunedin	700	3	-
Dunedin Lime & Cement	159	1	-
Laundry Workers:			
Auckland	950	3	1
Dunedin	150	1	-
Dunedin Metal Workers	160	1	-
Miners:			
Blackball	168	1	-
Brunner	195	1	1
Denniston	240	2	-
Canterbury	33	1	-
Mangapehi	86	1	-
Millerton	110	1	-
Ngakawau	153	1	-
Nightcaps	377	2	-
Ohura	70	1	-
Otago	187	1	-
Roa	70	1	-
Runanga State	430	2	-
Runanga Co-op	104	1	-
Thames	34	1	-
N.Z. Musicians	1,680	5	1
Painters:			
Gisborne	48	1	-
Christchurch	316	2	1
Dunedin	132	1	-
Wairarapa	37	1	-

TABLE 32 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Dunedin Plasterers	120	1	-
N.Z. Plumbers & Gasfitters	1,606	5	2
N.Z. Printing Trades	3,000	7	4
N.Z. R.T.A.	2,020	6	2
Dunedin Rope & Twine Workers	34	1	-
Wellington Rubber Workers	271	2	1
Wellington Saddlers	142	1	-
Seamen:			
Auckland	789	3	1
Dunedin	478	2	1
Wellington	900	3	2
Lyttelton	57	1	-
N.Z. Shipwrights	237	2	-
Ship, Yacht & Boat Builders	210	2	-
Blenheim Shop Assistants	222	2	-
Auckland Stevedores	100	1	-
Christchurch Stonemasons	40	1	-
Storemen & Packers:			
Christchurch	1,447	4	2
Napier	320	2	1
Southland	305	2	-
Auckland Sugar Workers	247	2	2
Auckland Tailors	66	1	-
Tally Clerks:			
Auckland	186	1	1
Wellington	110	1	-
Canterbury	45	1	-
Theatrical Workers:			
New Zealand	1,364	4	1
Dunedin	60	1	-
Timber Workers:			
South Auckland		2	2
Westland	800	3	-
Wellington	1,700	5	1

TABLE 32 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Tramwaymen:			
Auckland	878	3	1
Wellington	400	2	2
Christchurch	300	2	1
New Plymouth	32	1	-
Dunedin	234	2	1
Dunedin Transport Officials	20	1	-
Waterside Workers:			
Wellington	1,617	5	2
Nelson	95	1	-
New Plymouth	300	2	-
Timaru	136	1	1
Westport	48	1	-
Port Chalmers	200	1	1
Napier	300	2	1
Auckland Wharf Foremen	72	1	-
Woollen Mills:			
Canterbury	830	3	-
Wellington	620	3	2
N.Z. Workers	13,533	29	7
N.Z. Tobacco Workers	840	3	1
TOTALS	142,097		

SOURCE: NZLP, "Delegates Attending 1958 Annual Conference", 1958.

TABLE 33

TRADE UNIONS AFFILIATED TO THE LABOUR PARTY, 1975: MEMBERSHIP AND CONFERENCE CARD VOTES AND DELEGATES

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Otago Biscuit Workers	Unfinancial		
Nelson Biscuit Workers	144	1	-
Auckland Boilermakers	926	3	3
N.Z. Brewery Workers	1,462	4	2
Nelson Butchers	75	1	-
Waikato Carbonization Workers	33	1	-
Wellington Caretakers & Cleaners	2,946	7	1
N.Z. Carpenters	15,123	32	5
Clothing Trades:			
Canterbury	2,480	6	2
Otago	870	3	1
Wellington	4,297	10	4
Chief Stewards	Unfinancial		
Wellington Dairy Workers	37	1	-
Northern Drivers	6,338	14	2
Westland Drivers	319	2	-
Dunedin Electrical Workers	Unfinancial		
N.Z. Engine Drivers			
Waikato Engine Drivers	50	1	-
Westland Engine Drivers	26	1	-
N.Z. Engineers	43,051	88	11
North Shore Ferry Employees	25	1	-
Timaru Flour Mill Employees	78	1	1
Footwear Operatives:			
Canterbury	1,187	4	3
Dunedin	128	1	1
Wellington	682	3	1
Foremen and Stevedores:			
Auckland	150	1	-
Wellington	Unfinancial		

TABLE 33 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
Freezing Workers:			
Auckland	5,787	13	2
Tomoana	1,400	4	3
Wairoa	460	2	1
Auckland Fruit Preservers	400	2	2
Gisborne Gas Workers	23	1	-
Gold Dredge Workers	38	1	1
N.Z. Harbour Board Employees	3,005	8	3
N.Z. Hotel Workers	29,457	60	7
Wellington Ice Cream Workers	257	2	1
Dunedin Iron and Brass Moulders	100	1	-
Labourers:			
Northern and Taranaki	5,786	13	2
Wanganui Municipal	104	1	-
Wellington	1,080	4	-
Laundry Workers:			
Canterbury	238	2	1
Dunedin	360	2	1
Westland	Unfinancial		
Meat Workers:			
Canterbury	5,699	13	3
Gisborne	836	3	1
Milk Roundsmen's Union	164	1	-
Miners:			
Allison	90	1	-
Charming Creek	4	1	-
Denniston	93	1	1
Grey District Co-op.	42	1	-
Rotowairo	150	1	-
Runanga State	205	2	-
National Union of Railwaymen	11,300	24	6
Painters:			
Gisborne	Unfinancial		
Christchurch	Unfinancial		

TABLE 33 - Continued

Union	Members	Votes	Delegates
N.Z. Plumbers & Gasfitters	1,602	5	2
N.Z. Printing Trades	7,000	15	2
N.Z. Railway Tradesmen	2,098	6	2
Rubber Workers:			
Canterbury	906	3	1
Wellington	505	2	1
N.Z. Shipwrights	230	2	-
Auckland Soap & Tannery Workers	Unfinancial		
Auckland Sugar Workers	151	1	-
N.Z. Theatrical Workers	484	2	1
Wellington Timber Workers	1,100	4	1
Auckland Tramway Employees	783	3	1
Christchurch Tramway Employees	275	2	-
Dunedin Tramway Employees	110	1	-
New Plymouth Tramway Employees	28	1	-
Wellington Tramway Employees	362	2	2
Waterside Workers:			
Auckland	1,647	5	1
Gisborne	96	1	-
Lyttelton	684	3	-
Maunganui - Tauranga	655	3	3
Napier	508	3	-
Nelson	113	1	-
New Plymouth	345	2	-
Port Chalmers	134	1	1
Timaru	266	2	2
Wellington	1,239	4	3
Westport	30	1	-
Whangarei	102	1	-
Auckland Wharf Foremen	51	1	-
NZ Wood Pulp & Paper Products Emps.	1,802	5	1
Woollen Mill Employees:			
Christchurch	2,816	7	2
Oamaru	126	1	-
Wellington	900	4	1
TOTAL	184,656	419	105

SOURCE: NZLP, "Delegates Attending 1975 Annual Conference", 1975.

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